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PREFACE.

The following pages are intended only for general readers, and among them for those alone who still believe the Bible, and who, therefore, require neither tradition, research, nor wisdom of words to help their faith in the Scripture of Truth.

The witness it bears of itself is to such Christians a sufficient proof of its own truthfulness and integrity; they search it, therefore, not like others, in order to doubt as much as possible and to believe as little as they can,—but in order to live and grow thereby. As they have proved the utter emptiness and vanity of all that man's pretended wisdom will attempt to devise instead of it, so also from their own experience of "the vain babblings, and oppositions of science, falsely so called," do they know and feel that God's Word alone is and can be "a lamp unto their path and a light unto their feet" in their earthly pilgrimage; their only companion and trusty guide "to the city which hath foundations, the builder and maker

of which is God." And as everything else has failed to satisfy the cravings of their spirit after that which is and exists for ever, so is this Word also their food and provision by the way through this life to their eternal home. On it, therefore, do they rest their faith in "God's promises which in Christ are yea and in Him, Amen;" and on it also do they rear a sure and certain hope of resurrection to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

With such men only can I have any fellow-feeling; for them alone, therefore, were these pages written.

S. C. MALAN.

BROADWINDSOR,
May 3rd, 1867.

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ERRATA.

Page 74, l. 14, *for* cannot be good and bear them, *read* cannot be good and not bear them.
„ 89, l. 9, *for* we above, *read* we saw above.
„ 135, l. 8, *for* of that Church, *read* of the Church.
„ 137, l. 4, *for* Bethuel, thy mother's brother, *read* Bethuel, thy mother's father.
„ 276, l. 1, *for* faith and life, *read* faith and hope.
„ 432, l. 8, *for* Harim, *read* Abarim.
„ 434, l. 26, *for* was all Chemosh, *read* it was all Chemosh.

OUTLINE OF THE JEWISH CHURCH,

FROM A CHRISTIAN POINT OF VIEW.

INTRODUCTION.

I.

No sooner had Adam sinned, than God, in pity and in love for His creature thus estranged from Him, devised means to restore him to his former state of innocence and of life in God; yet not at once. Adam had sinned, and as he had won for himself the wages of sin, these wages were then told him in full: Of death thou shalt die.[1]

Thus doomed and fallen, Adam was driven from Paradise, where he now could no longer remain, only to hide himself among the trees of the garden from

[1] Gen. ii. 17. This sentence, as told in the original, although a simple idiom of the language (Gen. xx. 7), may yet, in this place, point at once to the death of the body—dust to dust—and to that of the soul, whereby is here understood, generally, the part of man that is not material, whose death is—alienation from God. "Quamvis humana anima," says S. Aug. (De Civ. D. lib. xiii. c. 2), "veraciter immortalis perhibeatur, habet tamen quandam etiam ipsa mortem suam. Mors igitur animæ fit, cum eam deserit Deus; sicut, corporis, cum id deserit anima. Ergo utriusque rei, id est, totius hominis mors est, cum anima

the presence of his Maker, whose voice he erst loved, but now dreaded, to hear. He then left; he left on the early morn of his existence that abode of peace and happiness; the cool shade of groves planted by the hand of God, that rang with the tangled melodies of birds attired in the brilliant plumage of that one spring-tide; he left the fresh and fragrant flowers that waved at his presence among the green meadows watered by the rivers of God; and more than this, he left his intimate fellowship with his Creator,—a fellowship that needed neither faith nor hope, but existence only, to enjoy it; he left all that to go forth and wander among the thorns and the thistles, that now sprang from the ground accursed for his sake, there to toil in the sweat of his brow, and with a heavy heart to till that same ground, and by it be reminded day after day that as he was taken thence, so also thither must he return.[1]

What a fall, for a creature made after the image and similitude of God! From Eden to the wilderness, from an unbroken intercourse with Him who is the fountain of Light and of Life, to remorse, degradation, and shame; to the lot, not of a son and heir, but of a guilty serf of the soil! Degraded? yea, and of his own choice,[2] fallen low, too, "come short of the glory

a Deo deserta deserit corpus." Unless, indeed, the expression "of death, or dying, thou shalt die," refer to the first and to the second death—the first of body and soul on earth, the second eternal. "What death," says S. Augustine, "did God threaten to inflict on the transgression of His commandment? Utrum animæ, an corporis, an totius hominis, an illam quæ appellatur secunda? Respondendum est, Omnes. Prima enim ex duabus constat; secunda ex omnibus tota." (Ib. c. 12.)

[1] Gen. iii. 17–19.

[2] "The good Creator," says S. Cyril of Jerusalem (Catech. ii.) "created man unto good works, τὸ δὲ κτισθὲν ἐξ οἰκείας προαιρέσεως εἰς

of God,"[1] yet not destroyed, his conscience bearing him witness both of his former glory and of his present degraded state, "while his thoughts accuse and excuse one another;"[2] punished, "alienated from the life of God,"[3] since of his own freewill he chose to die "in his trespasses and sins,"[4] yet not forsaken;[5] driven away from Paradise for his disobedience, yet neither denied nor forgotten;[6] so then also, toiling, afflicted, estranged, yet not in despair—no; for there was hope.[7] Eternal Justice had hardly uttered the sentence of death against Adam for his sin, when Mercy, that "rejoiceth against judgment," made him an offer of peace and of reconciliation[8] through Him who was one day to be born of a woman, "perfect God and perfect man,"[9] sent from heaven to this earth to make peace and reconciliation, and once more to raise fallen man from the earth in which he now was a stranger, to the Paradise of God whence he had come.

Dim, indeed, at first, was Adam's view of the promise,

πικρίαν ἐτράπη, but the creature of his own choice was turned to bitterness. Eccles. vii. 29."

[1] Rom. ii. 23. [2] Rom. ii. 15. [3] Eph. iv. 18. [4] Eph. ii. 1.

[5] See Gen. ii. 17 and iii. 6. [6] Is. lxiii. 9.

[7] Δεινὸν μὲν οὖν κακὸν ἡ ἁμαρτία, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀθεράπευτον. "Sin is indeed a terrible evil, but not incurable." (S. Cyril of Jerusalem, ib.)

[8] "Nec ignorabat Deus hominem peccaturum, sed providebat etiam gratiâ suâ populum piorum in adoptionem vocandum, remissisque peccatis justificatum Spiritu Sancto sanctis angelis in æternâ pace sociandum, novissimâ inimicâ morte destructâ." (S. Aug. De Civ. D. lib. xii. c. 22.)

[9] Gen. iii. 15. "He who died for us was neither small nor insignificant; He was not a lamb of the flock, nor yet an angel. He was God made man. Οὐ τοσαύτη ἦν τῶν ἁμαρτώλων ἡ ἀνομία, ὅση τῶν ὑπεραποθνήσκοντος ἡ δικαιοσύνη, and the iniquity of those who sinned was not so great as the righteousness of Him who died for them." (S. Cyril, Catech. xiii.)

yet sure was his hope in the coming of the Prince of Peace, towards Whom he now turned his eyes, as to the one bright beam of heavenly light that rent asunder the gloom in which he lay. But when would He come? Faith answered: He is faithful that promised: Wait. Enough then, for man, who believed the promise, to know that it would be fulfilled. On that he relied; and thus borne by the hope of again seeing Him face to face Whom he had known in Paradise, Adam entered upon his life of toil, of trouble, and of sorrow, made more sorrowful still by the recollection of the rest and peace he once enjoyed in his Maker's presence, from which, now banished, he was anon to reap the firstfruits of enmity between faith and unbelief, and be made to understand the terrible sentence uttered against himself, when he saw his son, the righteous Abel, dead, and Abel's own brother, who had slain him, a fugitive and vagabond in the earth.[1]

Ever since, the struggle then begun, the war then waged has never ceased between sin and righteousness, —between those who through faith looked forward to the coming of the promised Saviour, in Whom alone they could obtain remission of sins, and those who, at the bid of His foe, the ruler of this world, fain would have hindered that coming if they could. Even then, in the dawn of that time, the inward witness of those who lived by faith was to them the substance of a salvation they hoped for; and, since their faith in the promise of an Atonement found for them, released them at once from the curse of God on sin, and gave them hope of acceptance with Him, their faith was thus also to them the evidence of a Saviour not seen. "They

[1] Gen. iv.

died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed they were strangers and pilgrims in the earth."[1] It was faith in the sacrifice of the Lamb, prepared before the foundation of the world, that made "Abel offer a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts. By faith, also, was Enoch translated that he should not see death, and was not found because God had translated him; for before his translation he had this testimony that he pleased God. But, without faith, it is impossible to please Him; for he that cometh to God, must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."[2] So true it is that faith, which bears witness of itself, "is a gift of God,"[3] and "overcometh the world."[4]

And it was also "by faith," that after men began to multiply, and the earth was corrupt and filled with violence, "Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."[5] He believed God, and for his faith, he with his family was saved by the same waters that destroyed the ungodly; when, at God's bidding, the ark rose on the surging flood, and floated in peace on the bosom of the great deep, amid storms and tempests that shook the world; until, at last, the waters assuaged, the ark rested, and the bow drawn on the clouds retreating before the brilliant sun of a new

[1] Heb. xi. 13. [2] Ib. v. 4–6. [3] Eph. ii. 8.
[4] 1 John v. 4. [5] Heb. xi. 7.

world, became a pledge on God's part that never again should the waters of the flood destroy the earth.

A beautiful figure to the world that then was, and to the world that now is, of the Ark that saves us by water,[1] of the Church of the living God, in which alone we can brave the storms of life, and escape the destruction of all things,[2] until at last we land safe in her on the everlasting hills of another and better land.

[1] 1 Pet. iii. 20-21; 2 Pet. ii. 5. Just. Mart. Dial. c. Tryph. p. 367, alludes to this, saying: "Know ye not, O men, that God said to Jerusalem, through Isaiah, Ἐπὶ τοῦ κατακλυσμοῦ τοῦ Νῶε ἔσωσά σε. Τοῦτο δέ ἐστιν ὃ ἔλεγεν ὁ Θεὸς, ὅτι τὸ μυστήριον τῶν σωζομένων ἀνθρώπων ἐπὶ τοῦ κατακλυσμοῦ γέγονεν. I saved thee in the flood of Noah. This said God, because the mystery of the salvation of men was wrought out at the Flood." The quotation as given by J. M. however, exists nowhere. He probably quoted from memory Is. liv. 9. "Πρῶτον βάπτισμα τὸ τοῦ κατακλυσμοῦ εἰς ἐκκοπὴν ἁμαρτίας, the first baptism was that of the Flood, to cut off sin." (S. Athan. Dict. et Interpr. S. S., Opp. ii. p. 426.) In the opinion of S. Clement of Alex. (Strom. v. p. 550), even Plato's idea of a flood (De Legib. iii. par. 1, 2, ed. L.) was that of a periodical cleansing of the earth. While S. Cyprian (Epist. lxix.), speaking of 1 Pet. ii. 4, says, "Probat et contestat (d. Apost.) unam arcam Noe typum fuisse unius Ecclesiæ;" and in Epist. lxxv., "ostendens quoniam quomodo qui cum Noe in arca non fuerunt, non tantum purgati per aquam non sunt, sed statim diluvio illo perierunt; sic et nunc quicunque in Ecclesia cum Christo non sunt foris peribunt, nisi ad unicum et salutare Ecclesiæ lavacrum per pœnitentiam convertantur."—"In illa mirandæ capacitatis arca, universi generis animalium quantum reparationis aderat receptrice, congregatura ad se omne hominum genus Ecclesia figuratur, dum per lignum et aquam redemptio crucis Christi et ablutio regenerationis aperitur." (S. Ambros. De Voc. Gent. lib. ii.) "Arca procul dubio figura est peregrinantis in hoc sæculo civitatis Dei, hoc est Ecclesiæ." (S. Aug. Civ. D. lib. xv. c. 4.)

[2] Σὺ μὲν προτιμήσον, εἰ δοκεῖ, τοῦ σωζομένου Νῶε τὸ ὑποβρύχιον πλῆθος· ἐμοὶ δὲ συγχώρησον τῇ τοῦς ὀλίγους ἐχούσῃ κιβωτῷ προσδραμεῖν. "Prefer if thou wilt," says S. Athanasius, in his letter to those who judge of God's truth by men's opinion (vol. ii. p. 294), "to cast thy lot with the multitude that was drowned by Noah's flood; only let me take refuge in the ark, in which few only were saved."

II.

It may be well, therefore, at the outset, to ask, What is the Church?

The term *Church*[1] properly means the Lord's house, or the Lord's building. It comes to us from the Fathers and from other ecclesiastical writers of the first centuries; but it is neither so accurate nor so comprehensive as *Ecclesia*, the term chosen by the Holy Ghost from among all others, in order to make us understand the spiritual constitution of the Christian

[1] The word *Church* comes most likely from κυριακόν (δῶμα) or from κυριακή (οἰκία)—terms repeatedly found in the Greek Fathers and ecclesiastical writers, and rendered in Latin, as by S. Jerome, *Dominicum*, and by S. Cyprian (Ep. lxxxi.) *Ecclesia Dominica*.

In addition to what Suicer (Thesaur. Eccles. vol. ii. p. 191) says on the subject, we may notice the 74th Canon of the sixth Œcumenic Council, which is the same in words as the 28th of the Council of Laodicea, namely, ὅτι οὐ δεῖ ἐν ταῖς κυριακαῖς, ἢ ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις, τὰς λεγομένας ἀγάπας ποιεῖν, etc.; whereupon Zonaras, as quoted by Suicer, says that here the ἤ is not disjunctive, *or*, but explanatory, for ἤτοι, *that is*. Zonaras, however, overlooked the second article; and Agapius is a better Greek scholar, when he says (Πηδ. τῆς μιᾶς ἁγίας καθ. Ἐκκλησ. p. 163), Πρέπει νὰ προσημειώσωμεν, ὅτι ὁ Βαλσαμὼν, κυριακὰ μὲν θέλει νὰ ἐννοῇ ἐδῶ ὁ κανὼν κάθε τόπον ἀφιερωμένον τῷ Κυρίῳ, καὶ τὸν Νάρθηκα δηλ. καὶ πρόναον. Ἐκκλησίαν δὲ, τὸν καθ' αὐτὸ Ναόν. Ὅθεν καὶ τὸ ἤ, μόριον, δὲν δέχεται νὰ ἦναι ἐφερμηνευτικὸν, ὡς λέγει ὁ Ζωναρᾶς, ἀλλὰ διαζευκτικὸν, ὥστε ὁποῦ κατ' αὐτὸν, ὄχι μόνον μέσα εἰς τὰς ἐκκλησίας, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ εἰς τοὺς Νάρθηκας τῶν Ἐκκλησιῶν δὲν πρέπει νὰ τρώγουν τινές. "It is well, however, to remark that Balsamon is of opinion that here the canon understands by κυριακά every place consecrated to the Lord, as the sacristy or the porch; and by ἐκκλησία, the temple adjoining. Whence the particle ἤ cannot be explanatory, as Zonaras says, but it must be disjunctive, so that according to him this canon forbids any one to eat in the sacristy or in the porch belonging to the church itself." S. Cyril of Jerusalem also makes a distinction between κυριακόν and ἐκκλησία, when he says (Catech. xviii. p. 222, ed. Par.), κἂν ποτε ἐπιδημῇς ἐν πόλεσι, μὴ ἁπλῶς ἐξέταζε ποῦ τὸ κυριακόν ἐστι· καὶ γὰρ αἱ λοιπαὶ τῶν ἀσεβῶν αἱρέσεις, κυριακὰ τὰ ἑαυτῶν σπήλαια καλεῖν ἐπιχειροῦσι· μηδὲ ποῦ ἐστὶν ἁπλῶς Ἐκκλησία, ἀλλὰ ποῦ ἐστὶν ἡ καθολικὴ Ἐκκλησία· τοῦτο γὰρ

commonwealth. For, the sense in which the term *ecclesia* is used in the New Testament,[1] whether by our Saviour or by His apostles, is the sense in which that term was understood at the time they spoke and wrote; whether among Greek Jews, called Hellenes, or among Greeks themselves. But in either case, it meant in general, as it did at Athens, and in all Greek cities, a *lawful assembly*—an assembly, be it large or small, made up only of certain citizens who were called together

ἰδικὸν ὄνομα τυγχάνει τῆς ἁγίας ταύτης καὶ μητρὸς ἡμῶν ἁπάντων. "And if ever thou shouldst be travelling from city to city, there inquire not merely where the temple (κυριακόν) is, for other sects of ungodly men assume to call their dens temples; neither ask merely where is a Church, but ask where the Church Catholic is; for such is the proper name of this holy Mother of us all." So that Constantine (*Opŭit o blijaniem svodstvyè yazika Slav. Ross. s' Grech.*, vol. iii. p. 264) may be right, when speaking of *tserkov*, the Slavonic for *church*, he says that it comes from κυριακόν or κυριακή, through the change of *k* in *ts*, as in *Tsezar* for Καῖσαρ, *tsentavr* for κενταύριον, etc., although he differs from both S. Cyril and Balsamon, when he adds: Κυριακὸν κυρίως (παρὰ τοῖς θείοις πατράσι καὶ παρ' ἡμῖν ἤδη) ἡ κυρία καὶ ἔξοχος ἐκκλησία (ἀντιδιεσταλμένως πρὸς τὰς πέριξ τὰς μικράς, ὡς ἐν τοῖς μοναστερίοις), παρά τισί δε λέγεται κυριακὸν καὶ τὸ μέσον κύτος τοῦ ναοῦ, τὸ καὶ ἄλλως, καθολικὸν (πρὸς διαστολὴν ἑκατέρωθεν τοῦ ναοῦ παρεκκλήσιων). "Κυριακόν is said in general (as among the Fathers, and even among our own selves) for the principal and finest church, as distinguished from the smaller churches around, as in monasteries); some also call κυριακὸν the middle of the temple, which others again call καθολικόν, relatively to the smaller churches (or chapels) on each side of the ναός, or temple."

I may further add that, the *Kormtchaya* (or collection of canons, etc., in Slavonic, printed at Moscow in 1771), p. 140, translates the canon above quoted by *pirove v'tserkvakh netvoryatsya*, "banquets are not to be held in churches," making no distinction between κυριακή and ἐκκλησία. In the commentary, however, it says, "*Ne podobaetj Bojia domu obstchavo domu tovoriti*—the house of God is not to be made a common house." On the whole, then, the term *Church* (*cyrcean*, *kirk*, etc.) is not so good a substitute for the original ἐκκλησία as the term ἐκκλησία, *ecclesia* itself and its derivatives, which, according to the best authorities, ranks higher than κυριακόν, the origin of the word Church.

[1] S. Matt. xviii. 17.

for a definite purpose, and according to certain prescribed regulations.[1]

The *ecclesia* at Athens, then, consisted of a part of the nation only—of (1) all citizens that were (2) free, born of free parents, (3) above eighteen and under sixty years of age, and (4) who were not disqualified by crime or defamation. These were on certain days *called forth* from the town or country, by a herald sent to them, *to call* them to the place of meeting, generally the public square, where the assembly was fenced in with hurdles, to prevent foreigners or unlawful persons from taking part in the proceedings. When the preparations were made, the place was then purified and sprinkled with blood; a prayer was offered by the president, who sat in a pulpit, for the prosperous issue of the assembly thus lawfully gathered, and for the welfare of the State, and then the proceedings began. Every speaker wore a wreath of myrtle until he had ended his speech; and when the business was over, the Prytanes by whom the assembly was called, dismissed it.[2]

Wherein we notice (1) that this *ecclesia* was not a *congregation* only,[3] that is, an indiscriminate gathering of people, but that it consisted (2) of only a *certain portion* of the people, (3) *chosen* by virtue of certain rights, and (4) *called*, as being already possessed of

[1] Therefore was the irregular assembly mentioned in Acts xix. 23 *seq.*, called a "concourse and uproar," as distinguished from the "lawful assembly" (v. 39) in which such matters should have been discussed.

[2] Hermann, Griech. Alt. vol. i. p. 375. Jul. Pollux, Onom. viii. 95, *seq.* Ammonius περὶ λεξ. s. v. Aristoph. Acharn. 19, and schol.; and, in another sense, Aves, 1030. Æschin. ix. 35, etc.

[3] Ἐκκλησίαν τε οὐκ ἐποίει αὐτῶν οὐδὲ ξύλλογον οὐδένα.· "Pericles called together, of them, neither an *ecclesia* nor a congregation of any kind." (Thucydid. ii. 22.)

those rights; for the rights they already had entitled them to the calling, which gave them fresh privileges as members of the *ecclesia;* a calling, however, and privileges which (5) they might forfeit or lose altogether by crime, defamation, or felony. We therefore understand why this term *ecclesia* was chosen rather than any other, even than that of *flock*,[1] in order to convey to us an idea of what the Church of God is; whether we look at her merely in this world, in her human and visible state, or consider her as a whole, both in heaven and earth.

For we see (1) that the Church at present is not a "congregation" only, as some men say, a motley gathering of anything and of everybody, but that (2) she consists of certain persons that are *called forth* from the world, "called of God by His grace,"[2] "according to His purpose,"[3] "by the Lord,"[4] "called of Jesus,"[5] "by the Gospel,"[6] "to be saints,"[7] "in one body,"[8] "in one hope of their calling,"[9] "out of darkness into His marvellous light,"[10] "to eternal life,"[11] "to eternal glory,"[12] "to kingdom and glory,"[13] "to glory and virtue,"[14] "to receive the promise,"[15] by reason of certain rights they already possess in the foreknowledge of God, whereby they are said to be, not only *called* as out of one and the same people, but

[1] "Ἐκκλησία δὲ καλεῖται φερωνύμως, διὰ τὸ πάντας ἐκκαλεῖσθαι καὶ ὁμοῦ συνάγειν. The Church is called *Ecclesia*," says S. Cyril (Catech. xviii.), "meaning thereby that it calls out all men, and brings them together into one;" "the flock" being made up—not of all that are thus called out of the world, but of those only who, being called, obey the rule of the Good Shepherd.

[2] Gal. v. 15. [3] Rom. viii. 28. [4] 1 Cor. vii. 17. [5] Rom. i. 6.
[6] 2 Thess. ii. 11. [7] Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 2. [8] Col. iii. 15.
[9] Eph. iv. 4. [10] 1 Pet. ii. 9. [11] 1 Tim. vi. 12. [12] 1 Pet. v. 10.
[13] 1 Thess. ii. 12. [14] 2 Pet. i. 3. [15] Heb. ix. 15, etc.

also (3) *chosen* out of the whole world, "elect according to the foreknowledge of God,"[1] as (4) "fellow-citizens with the saints,"[2] (5) "free from sin,"[3] "from death,"[4] free of "the liberty wherewith Christ made them free,"[5] through whom they receive the Spirit not of bondage again to fear, "but of adoption,"[6] being "made free indeed by Him the Son."[7]

These rights, however, the chosen and called of God may forfeit and lose, if they "quench the Spirit" given them,[8] and "fail of the grace of God,"[9] and "fall away"[10] and be "cast away."[11] Therefore does God, whose "gifts and calling are without repentance" on His part,[12] warn those whom He has chosen and called, "who are partakers of the heavenly calling,"[13] to "know the hope of their calling,"[14] and "to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure;"[15] "to press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus,"[16] and "to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called,"[17] —all of which entreaties and warnings would be useless if it followed that those who are called and chosen could never lose the rights they possess. Truly, never on God's part; but by their own fault, alas! easily. Therefore are they told to give all diligence to make

[1] 1 Pet. i. 2. "Οὐ γὰρ νῦν τὸν τόπον ἀλλὰ τὸ ἄθροισμα τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν, Ἐκκλησίαν καλῶ. I call *ecclesia*," says S. Clem. of Alex. (Strom. lib. vii.), "not the place, but the gathering together of all the elect;"—whether by "election," or "choice," we understand the call out of the rest of mankind, or the gathering together of those who shall finally be set apart as heirs to the kingdom of heaven.

[2] Eph. ii. 19. [3] Rom. vi. 18. [4] Rom. viii. 2. [5] Gal. v. 1.
[6] Rom. viii. [7] S. John viii. 36. [8] 1 Thess. v. 19.
[9] Heb. xii. 15. [10] Heb. vi. 6. [11] 1 Cor. ix. 27. [12] Rom. xi. 29.
[13] Heb. iii. 1. [14] Eph. i. 18. [15] 2 Pet. i. 10. [16] Phil. iii. 14.
[17] Eph. iv. 1.

sure not only their calling, but also their election, that is, their being chosen, first, when called, and last, when finally set apart, as good wheat from the tares; and thus "to work out their salvation with fear and trembling," that is; "so to walk according to the vocation wherewith they are called" as that they may, at last, reach the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls,—in other words, obtain their eternal safety in the kingdom of God. No salvation without safety; no safety while there is danger, and danger lasts as long as we live.

As to the rule and government of the *Ecclesia* of Christ, we need not discuss it at present, but only notice that the ideas of selection, combination, order, rule, fellowship, union, and of a definite outline or form, present themselves under a different but more endearing aspect in the second term by which the Church is called, namely, the "*House of God*,"[1] the Church of the Living God,[2] the members of which are "fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God,"[3] and "of the household of faith,"[4] over which there is "one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in them all"[5] that are made "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus,"[6] "Who gave power to become the sons of God to them that believe on His name,"[7] "and who, if children, are then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ,"[8] through "Whom they re-

[1] Also called the "City of God," and mystically spoken of as Zion, Jerusalem, etc. Ἐκκλησία πόλις. (S. Athan. Interpr. Parab. Quæst. i.) "Ἀπολιόρκητος ἀτυράννητος πόλις ἐπὶ γῆς. The Church," says S. Clem. of Alex. (Strom. iv.) "is a city that can neither be taken nor ruled by tyrants."

[2] Tim. iii. 15. [3] Eph. ii. 19. [4] Gal. vi. 10. [5] Eph. iv. 6.
[6] Gal. iii. 26. [7] S. John i. 12. [8] Rom. viii. 17.

ceive the Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father,"[1] "Whose family in heaven and earth is named."[2] Yet those ideas of love, with the additional feature of One and the same Spirit and Life, are set forth in a still closer and more touching manner in the Church considered, thirdly, as—

The Body of Christ, of which He is the Head, and of which His redeemed are the members that live through His Spirit in them. For He was given of God the Father, says S. Paul, "to be the head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all," "Who loved the Church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing: but that it should be holy and without blemish."[3]

This, however, clearly points to a time to come; for the mystical Body of Christ, "the blessed company of all faithful people," is not yet complete in Him, and will only be completed when all the members thereof shall have been brought together, and not one is wanting,—that is, when He shall have gathered His saints unto Himself in His heavenly kingdom. Yet, inasmuch as He embraces in His love the whole of His Church, whether past, present, or to come, He looks upon the spirits of just men already made perfect in heaven, and upon those of men on earth struggling to be perfected, as one, through the One and same Spirit and Life that animates all the members of that one Body, with faith and hope while they are on earth and absent from the

[1] Rom. viii. 15. [2] Eph. iii. 15.

[3] Eph. i. 22-23; v. 25, *seq.*

Lord; but with fulness of joy when satisfied with His likeness and in His presence in heaven.

Hence we gather (1) that the Church or Body of Christ is not a shapeless mass of particles or fragments adhering together according to the laws of matter, but (2) that it consists in a definite outline and number of members, known of Him who is the Head, "from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God;"[1] according to certain set and fixed laws of spiritual life. And we further see from this (3) that, since the Spirit and Life of the Head flows from it into the Body, and animates every member of it alike, being for the whole Body the one bond of the closest union and fellowship, no member that is not joined to the Body can share in the life thereof, and no member joined to it can possibly say it has a share in the Spirit and Life of the Head unless it shows it by its own individual life and actions; the Spirit of Life bearing its own witness in every living member of the Body. Whence it follows (4) that in order to receive the Life that flows into the Body from the Head, one must be made member of the Body, outwardly and in the spirit; for out of that Body there is neither spirit, life, nor salvation.

We see, then, that the leading idea of *lawful constitution* implied in an *ecclesia*, and that of *rule and government*, conveyed by a *Church*, or House of God, are both more fully developed, together with the idea of intimate love, union, and oneness of spirit and life in the *Body of Christ*, which He purchased unto Himself, at the price of His precious blood, of which He is the

[1] Col. ii. 19.

Head, and therefore the Life, the one object of the faith, love, and hope of every member of that Body.[1] And since that Body, properly so called, will be whole only when completed in heaven, it is natural to suppose that, to the portion of that Church on earth, and not yet perfected, should be given, a figure, type, or representation of what that Church is hereafter to be in heaven, whether as the lawful assembly of all the qualified citizens of that kingdom, or as the family or the Body with one Head that governs the whole.

And so it is. The first coming of Christ; "the Desire of all nations," Who is the head of that Church or family, "which in heaven and earth is named,"[2] was so brilliant an event that He is called by the prophet, "the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings," and that the day of His appearing is said to be "the great and terrible day of the Lord."[3] That day, although far less brilliant and far less glorious than is to be the day of His second coming, of which it was a pledge, did yet turn the whole period of time that preceded His appearing, from what was the gloom of the darkest night for the world at large, into a long twilight and dawn for the country over which He rose, and whose inhabitants, while moving among the dim shadows cast by the glimmer of that distant sunrise, were, nevertheless, to be reminded constantly by these very shadows of the coming Light, which already cast them. In other words, God, in order to set forth

[1] Τοῖς πᾶσι γὰρ πάντα, μένων αὐτὸς κατὰ φύσιν ὅπερ ἐστί. "He is all things to every member of His Body, in His nature and attributes. In His unchangeable dignity of Son of God, He becomes our best and most pitiful physician, accommodating Himself to our infirmities, whether as our Mediator or as our High Priest." (S. Cyril, Catech. x.)

[2] Eph. iii. 15. [3] Mal. iv.

visibly before men a figure of what the Church, of which He is Father, will be both in Him and in His Son, "whom He gave to be the head over all things in that Church," chose out of all the nations of the earth one people which he constituted and called "His Church," "His people," or "His House," and Himself the King, the Lord, or the Father thereof, to which He gave His laws, and made known His will, and which He led, ruled, and governed like a visible king, Lord, or Father, either immediately by the timely interference of His Almighty power, and by the voice of the oracle at the mercy-seat which He appointed for the purpose of making known His will, or mediately, through the servants or ministers He ordained, taught, and sent to declare His counsels to the people.

This visible form of God's government of His people was called *Theocracy* by Josephus,[1] one of that people, who says: "There are different forms of government, such as aristocracy, oligarchy, and the like; but our lawgiver, Moses, choosing none of these, instituted what we may call the Theocracy"—that is, God's visible rule and government of His people, of which He styled Himself not only the King and the Father, but also "the Lord and Commander-in-Chief of the hosts of Israel," Who led them forth to battle, which His generals fought, under Him. This nation was constituted God's own and peculiar people,[2] not only by their being the children of Abraham, to whom the promises were made, but also by the mystical rite of baptism, and by the civil one of circumcision, without which no strangers could be admitted members of the commonwealth of Israel. And since God combined in

[1] Contr. Ap. lib. ii. c. 16. [2] Deut. iv. 20; xiv. 2.

Himself the twofold character of spiritual and of temporal king, the laws, the statutes, and precepts which He gave them were of necessity manifold in kind.

They were (1) laws and statutes adapted to the peculiar character of the people as a nation, which God gave it as civil king and ruler; (2) laws and statutes that were the expression of His will, holy, just, and good, as King of Heaven and Earth; and (3) they were figures, outlines, or shadows of better things to come in the person of His Son, whom He gave to be the Head of His Church, and to whom the whole Church looked in those days before His first coming, as she now looks not only to that first coming, but also in steadfast faith and hope to His second appearing in glory.

III.

It is therefore natural to expect (1) that God, thus governing His people chiefly as a civil king present among them, should lead the mass of the nation mostly by promises of temporal and visible blessings; and (2) that His servants, sent to teach His people during such a state of things, should be taught of Him the secrets of His will, chiefly concerning things to come.

That is also what we find to be the case. We find, for instance, (1) that the resurrection of the dead, eternal life, the redemption by Christ, and like truths, were but seldom told in plain terms under the law; because the people's obedience to God was by Him required to Himself, chiefly as to a visible king who rewarded them ostensibly by victories over their enemies, by powerful interposition in their favour, by peace, plenty, and by other temporal blessings. And (2) we

find that truths, which relate to the Church in her perfected and glorified state, were taught of God only to some few favoured individuals, set up from time to time as harbingers or prophets of a future state of things, and sent from God in order to direct the eyes of the most earnest among the people to the coming of Christ, and to the better and more enduring inheritance of heaven, of which their own land was a faint image.

Speaking of these figures or types, the holy Apostle tells us distinctly that they were only "shadows of good things to come, and not the very image of those things;"[1] thereby giving us clearly to understand that all we may expect to discover in them of the objects they foreshadowed is—a broad outline only, and no details.[2]

Obvious as this is in the case of a natural shadow, it has often been overlooked in the investigation of types in the Old Testament. The civil or national features of the people of Israel, upon which "the shadows of good things to come" fell, have often been mis-

[1] Heb. x. 1.

[2] If we look at the shadow of any object, we see that the outline of it is more or less distinct, according to the more or less uneven surface of the ground upon which it falls. Thus, the shadow of a tree falling on a plane surface gives a distinct outline of the principal masses of that tree, while the same outline can hardly be traced either against a hedgebank, or on a rocky or stony ground. Moreover, we also notice that however much the outline of the shadow be modified by the surface upon which it falls, the several objects lying on that surface form no part whatever of the shadow, which has only two properties—an outline more or less distinct, and a greater or less dimness of body, but of course no details. Thus, in the case of the shadow that falls on, say, stones, grass, or leaves, these stones, this grass, and those leaves have no other connection with the shadow that falls on them than to be in the shade thereof, and to render the outline of it more difficult to trace.

taken for parts or details of those shadows; and because, in some cases, a distinct outline of the shadow might be traced, therefore were all other objects lying in the shade of that shadow made by some writers parts or details thereof, albeit they have no connection at all with it. And thus have types been multiplied, and been modelled out of incidents either in the history or in the civil constitution of Israel, that never were intended as types; and that should not be spiritualized. Enough, indeed, if we can always trace accurately the mere outline of the shadows in the law; and better, assuredly, to confess we cannot, than to find analogies that do not exist, and thus to explain away the real intention of Scripture. Caution, also, in this case, is assuredly safer than presumption.

So truly were the rites, the ceremonies, and the service of the Levitical priesthood mere shadows of better things, that the sacrifices intended as shadows of the sacrifice of Christ were to be repeated daily and continually, thus reminding those who offered them (1) that there was in them no substance or real efficacy,—that the blood of bulls and of calves could not take away sins, otherwise they would not be offered so repeatedly; and (2) that they should look through those sacrifices and offerings to the one great sacrifice such offerings were intended to represent, and thus be brought by the law of commandments, of rites, and of ceremonies, as by a schoolmaster, to Christ.

In other words, the people of Israel moved among shadows, in which it was unconsciously taking part,—shadows, too, that not only told of the bright light that cast them, but that also reflected, as all shadows do more or less, that light to such a degree as to ap-

pear comparatively luminous in the surrounding gloom of heathenism. And since light and shadows are inseparably connected, and each forms, as it were, a part of the other, the people that lived in the shadows cast by the light of the Gospel which we enjoy, could not, as S. Paul says, be perfect without us; neither could we be perfect without them; but they and we form part of the whole, complete in Him who is the Light.[1]

As regards, then, those types or shadows under the law,—those at least that are so plain as not to be mistaken, "and are thus of no private interpretation," —we can at best expect to find in them (1) only an outline more or less well defined, according to the time and circumstances under which those shadows fell, but (2) dimly portrayed; and, (3) owing to their being interwoven with the civil statutes and features of the Israelitish nation, we find that the outline of many can hardly be traced. Hence it happens (4) that, the outline being thus often broken off or interrupted, we can obtain as we do, a distinct form of only sundry special features, shadows, or types, while we fail in our attempt to draw from those shadows the tracing of a whole figure perfect in all its parts.

Lastly, we notice that the special or circumstantial types and shadows become fewer as the period of Theocracy draws nearer to a close. Thus they abound under the Mosaic dispensation and under Joshua; they begin to grow less under the Judges and the first kingdom, fewer still during the second, while under the later prophets these types are yet more scarce; until, after that time there remained nothing but the Levitical priesthood to point to the dawn of the Sun of

[1] S. John i. 9.

Righteousness, that was soon to rise with healing in His wings. Then ceased, properly speaking, the Theocratic government of God the Father; His personal rule over His Church[1]—the Church of God, by comparison with the Church of Christ the Son, that began when He, the Shiloh, came,[2] and the sceptre departed from Judah. Then did the visible government of the Father as King over His people come to an end, when He made over that government to the Son, "whom He gave to be Head over all things to the Church." Then did the shadows of the law disappear in the brightness of His appearing, and then was a dominion given Him to which there is to be no end.

Looking, then, at the whole Church from her beginning, we see[3] "that as God created one man to be both parent and a better pattern of the human race than many men created at once could have been," so also did He, when definitely establishing His Church in the earth, do so, first in the person of one man, Abra-

[1] The period during which the Theocracy lasted has been variously reckoned from Moses to Samuel; from Moses to the Captivity; or from Abraham to the coming of Christ. This seems the most correct reckoning; inasmuch as the kings of Israel were styled "the Lord's anointed," as viceroys under Him; and at no time during the kingdom of Israel, or of Judah, did God's oracle on the mercy-seat altogether cease to make known the will of Him, the king of the land and of the people. For a full account of the Theocracy, see Spencer, De Legg. Hebr. pp. 300–348; Waterland, Div. Leg. of Moses, vol. ii. pp. 236–364; J. D. Michaelis, Mos. Recht, vol. i. pp. 180–188; Carpzov, Opper. Critic. pp. 7, 27, etc.

[2] Ἕως ἐὰν ἔλθῃ, ᾧ ἀπόκειται, (S. Cyril Jer. Cath. xii.) σημεῖον οὖν ἔδωκε τῆς Χριστοῦ παρουσίας, τὸ παύσασθαι τὴν ἀρχὴν τῶν Ἰουδαίων, εἰ μὴ νῦν ὑπὸ Ῥωμαίους εἰσὶν οὔπω ἦλθεν ὁ Χριστός. "He gave as a sign of the coming of Christ, the end of the kingdom or government of the Jews; if they are not now under the Romans, then Christ has not come."

[3] S. Aug. De Civ. lib. xii. c. 21.

ham, whom He called in a very remarkable manner, and with whom He made the only covenant possible between Him and His creature under such circumstances,—namely, a covenant that rested on that creature's faith in God's call, and in obedience to it. As a reward, God promised Abraham that his posterity should be His peculiar people, and should inherit His promises, and that out of that posterity the Saviour should be born. Accordingly, no sooner had Abraham's descendants become a nation, than they were made God's Church and people, itself only a figure of another and better state of that Church that is to last until the restitution of all things, when the whole Church shall enter triumphant in His kingdom above, and there reign with Him for ever.

Thus may we compare the whole Church from her earliest beginnings to her final entrance into heaven, to a tree. The roots will then represent the patriarchs both before and after the Flood, until Abraham, who may then be compared to the part of the tree immediately above ground, and that supports the stem, which will thus represent the Theocracy or the people of Israel before the coming of Christ. The branches of this tree will be the several divisions of Christ's Holy Apostolic Church in various parts of the world; and the fruit found on those branches will be the spirits of just men made perfect, the fruits of the Church gathered unto everlasting life. As the sap is one and the same throughout the tree, though under different aspects, whether it be drawn by the roots, or conveyed by the stem and the branches until it be wrought out into leaves, blossom, and delicious fruit—so also is the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost and Giver of Life, who is

inseparable from true faith, one and the same, whether in the primitive faith of Abel, in Enoch's walk with God, in the life of Abraham, in the Psalms of David, in the prophecies of Isaiah, in the Gospels, at the Pentecost, in the Epistles, in the death of martyrs slain for the faith of Christ, or among the saints around the Throne of God.

Or, to make use of another comparison, we see therein the time of "bondage under the elements of the world," when the Church was "under tutors and governors, and the son differed nothing from a servant," of which S. Paul speaks;[1] a state of growth and of development, as of the bud into the perfect blossom and fruit, as of the child into the perfect man; but not of changes as of the truth into a lie, of faith into doubt, or of God's Holy Spirit into the waverings of the human mind, as certain writers of the day fain would make us think. For as the light, whether it be refracted in a shadow, or reflected by objects in that shade, or whether it shine upon earth or within the boundless space of its own realms, is one and the same, —so is also "the faith once delivered to the saints." It is one, whether in Abel or in S. Paul, though in a different degree; it is, as S. Cyril of Alexandria says very truly, "the right faith he taught us, which is always new."[2] "For there is one Body, and one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling; —one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all. But unto every member of that Body is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ; till we all come to the unity of the Faith, and of

[1] Gal. iv. 1–7. [2] Epist. in Zoega, Codd. Sahid. p. 278.

the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ," in heaven.[1]

So then, from the pattern of the Church set us by God Himself, whether in the early patriarchs, in the person of Abraham, in his children, or in the present state of Gospel dispensation, we very plainly see two things: first, as regards the inward and spiritual life of the Church, that she walks by faith in promises made by God, that were and that are truths placed by Him before her eyes, as objects she held, she holds still, and will continue to hold until her faith in them is exchanged for sight, and her hope for everlasting joy. The Church can and could no more exist without these objective truths, than Abel could have offered a better sacrifice than Cain, without faith in that promise of a Saviour, or than Abraham could or would have left his native land in search of a strange country unknown to him, if he had not, first of all, believed the promise God made him of it; thus setting before himself that country and God's promises as the objects of his faith, and of the hope in which he lived ever since he left Ur and Haran for the hills of Canaan.

Abraham's faith and his obedience to God were the foundation upon which God rested all His subsequent covenants with him; that of circumcision was but the seal of his righteousness by faith, and the covenant by the rite of baptism in the Red Sea, whereby Abraham's children were constituted God's "Church in the Wilderness," was by virtue of the previous covenant of circumcision that warranted the Israelites to be the children of the Father of the Faithful, who first be-

[1] Eph. iv. 1-13.

lieved in God and then obeyed Him, and only afterwards inherited the promise. As with Abraham, then, so with his children, and so with us also, if we wish to be blessed with him. God's covenant with every one of us individually, if it be to last until we inherit the promise of His eternal kingdom, must rest on our own individual "righteousness, which is by faith." With it that covenant stands; without it it falls.

And secondly—from the outward form and constitution of the Church given us of God, we see that His Church is a national Church. According to His purpose and to His will, the Church is to form an integral part of the commonwealth, and be upheld and supported by it. A voluntary system of Church, one under which all creeds and all sects have equal right, and are equally supported by the State, is only the offspring of later ungodly times; but it never formed part of God's plan of His Church on earth. In proportion, therefore, as His Church is upheld and supported by the State, does His blessing rest on that State; not else. For those who attempt to prove a different state of things from the beginnings of the Apostolic Church, assembled even in private houses, overlook the fact that those were the first beginnings among heathen nations, with which those Churches were at variance, and could have nothing in common.

But this does not, of course, hold good in a Christian country, which is, in fact, an outward Church on a large scale. Not, indeed, that the State should be governed by ecclesiastical laws, as in the case of the Roman power, thereby doomed to an effete decrepitude; but that the civil power and the Church should be joined together for the support and comfort of each other; a

union that must result in greatness, as in the case of England. For a Christian State, therefore, to wed itself to no Church, but to profess to uphold all forms and all sects alike, is simply to abjure the faith; it is exactly as if Israel had thrown up all allegiance to the service of God's temple, and had pretended still to call itself the people of God; or, as if the Church of Antioch, or that of Corinth, had professed utter indifference for its faith and doctrine; when they would each have ceased to be a Church. But as to Israel, we know what came of the nation when the lowest of the people were made priests, when a molten calf was set up at Bethel, another at Dan, and the shrine of Baal was reared on the heights around Jerusalem. God withdrew His blessing, and the nation was ruined.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

THE CALL OF ABRAHAM.

A FATHER's blessing rested on Shem, and God abode with him. His children, therefore, had not, like those of his two brothers, to wander far from their homestead, but they quietly spread, increased, and settled at the foot of the mountains on which their father was saved, to which they then clung, and even now do look as to the home of their birth.[1] Yea, even when by right of conquest at God's bidding, they overcame the children of Ham, and these had, in

[1] The expression the "mountains of Ararat," Gen. viii. 4, upon which the ark rested, does not in any way refer to Mount Ararat or Mount Masis, not far from Estchmiadzin, upon which, Armenian tradition says, some timber of the ark was for a long time to be found. The words of the Hebrew original simply mean the "mountains of Armenia," Ararat being the name of a northern province of Armenia, which was afterwards applied to the whole country. But it seems more probable that, according to the Chaldean tradition preserved in the Targums and elsewhere, the ark rested on the mountains of Kardu, *i. e.* one of the Kurdish hills, that rise to the north-east of the plains of Assyria,

fulfilment of the doom uttered against them, to choose between death, flight from their land, or, in it, bondage to their elder brothers, the children of Shem,—these only took possession of a country promised them, and which, by its position, must have been their own.

Yet, although singled out by a special blessing from among other families of mankind, the children of Shem were also, with the rest, enveloped in the night that soon overspread the earth, when the last gleam of the light of truth, that set on the plains of Shinar, for awhile lingered, and, at last, died on the hills that stand around the cradle of mankind. But a people already chosen, even in those days,—a generation that was to be among the nations of the earth, what "the children of the light," the chosen generation, the royal priesthood, is in the world at present, ere it alone reigns above,—could not continue in the gloom of ignorance and of estrangement from God, in which the earth was plunged. The children of Shem might indeed even then have, so to speak, "light in their dwellings," in the midst of surrounding darkness; they had kept up their father's tongue among the family of Heber, whence, afterwards, Abram and his race were called Hebrews; they might themselves, even then, live by faith and hope in the promises handed down among them from father to son; but such a glimmer of light could not suffice. They were, in the counsels of Him who chose them from the first,

whence Noah and his family descended into the lea of Mesopotamia, spread before them, after the waters had retreated. But as these hills are counted to Armenia, to the high table-land that rises between Assyria and the southern slopes of the Caucasus, the words of the original Hebrew are applicable to them, and there, accordingly, do we place the cradle of the human race after the Flood.

to be a light, a witness, and a warning, not only to themselves, but to the whole earth; they were not only to reap a blessing for themselves, but they were also, one day, to bestow blessing, grace, and glory on all nations around. God, therefore, gave them first His oracles; He lighted first among them the lamp of the knowledge of Him, to guide them aright during the long twilight that was to last unto the rising of the Sun of Righteousness. And He set to them and to His whole Church a pattern, and taught them all how to walk on earth by faith, so as to please Him, and how to hope, so as to inherit His promises, when He called Shem's own descendant Abram, and said unto him, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee."[1]

Thus did God call Abram, in ratification of His promise to Shem, yet of His own free will; and Abram answered the call, believed God, and obeyed Him. The ray of light, the breath of the Spirit; the call, whether it was in the new, strange, yet irresistible promptings of the heart, or in a voice that seemed to sound in Abram's ears, and that wrought in him such a wonderful change,—the call could only come from heaven; and from heaven it came. Abram never could have dreamt of God's voice, had it never spoken; but when it once spake, there could then be no doubt about it. It kindled in Abram feelings altogether new; it gave him a faith he had not before; it opened his heart to a hope he had never indulged; it widened, it stretched his view from the horizon of his own plains to a land beyond, and to another and a yet bet-

[1] Gen. xii. 1.

ter one still further off, and heavenly. God's voice, in short, bare witness of itself; it convinced Abram of its truth, and gave him no rest but in obedience to its commands.

But for this call, but for this revelation of God to Abram, Abram would have continued in the plains of Padan-Aram, and never would have reached Canaan; he never could have invented the thought of the promised land, neither could nor would he, of his own accord, have torn himself from all his earthly possessions, to lead a wandering life in search of a land, he knew not where. Never. The choice, the call, the promise, the faith in that promise, and the obedience to that call, were all given of Him who willed it, and who called and promised in accordance to His will. Even the Alexandrian philosopher reminds us, "not that Abram saw God, but that God appeared, or revealed Himself unto him; for it was impossible," says he, "that a man should of himself comprehend that which really is, namely God; unless that truth had shone in his presence, and God had shown Himself to him."[1]

Impossible. For it matters not whether Abram shared in the traditions of his kindred, or whether he, like the rest of the citizens of Ur, worshipped Cainan or Tarhato. Until called by God, Abram was like those around him, like his own children, who despised the covenant of God, like those of us who do the same, and ere the grace of God reach us. Abram, in short, was a "natural man," of whom, S. Paul says, that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; nei-

[1] Philo, De Abr. p. 361.

ther can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."[1]

Men may attempt to deny such an inconvenient text; but they can neither refute nor disprove it; for even if it were not revealed, it is philosophically true. It is true, according to Christian philosophy, and to the real state of the case, that, as S. Paul intimates,[2] man consists of "spirit, soul, and body." These stand one to another in a relation which, for the sake of illustration, we may compare to three circles intersecting one another at the centre; and a man is called either spiritual, natural, or carnal, according to whether the spirit, the soul, or the body, is uppermost in that figure, and holds sway over the other two. This mutual relationship and the nature of the spirit in man, as distinct from his intellect, was never understood by the Greek and Latin philosophers of old. "Alienated," as they were, "from the life of God through the ignorance that was in them,"[3] they either altogether ignored the spirit as a distinct attribute in man, or they confounded it with the breath, ascribing some of the leadings of that spirit whose instincts are God-wards to the better part of the intellect; which intellect, together with feeling, affections, and desire or lust, made up the soul of man according to their ideas.[4]

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 14. [2] 1 Thess. v. 23. [3] Eph. iv. 18.

[4] *Ψυχικὸς δὲ ἄνθρωπος οὐ δέχεται τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὅτι πνευματικῶς ἀνακρίνεται.* The Greek and Latin philosophers, anterior to the coming of Christ, had little or no idea of S. Paul's definition of man into spirit, soul, and body. Catching at the *idea* of active invisible agency connected with a "spirit," they either identified *τὸ πνεῦμα* with the breath, or, finding in themselves inklings of an attribute better than the bare intellect, the instincts of which were towards God, they

But the Gospel that brought life and immortality to light teaches us better things. It tells us of "Him who is Spirit,"[1] who created man "after His own image and similitude," making him, of course, most like Himself in his spirit, which He gave him as means or channel of direct intercourse with Himself; for "His true worshippers worship Him in spirit and in truth;" and such alone He seeketh for Himself. This reveals to us man's real life, the life he had in God, ere he fell from that blissful state; and it tells us also of the life to which he is to be restored by God's will and mercy. And, further, it brings us to recognize this spiritual and divine element in man, as endowed with attributes, and used for purposes totally distinct from those of the soul, properly so called. For man under the influence of his soul alone may be most intellectual and affectionate, but is sensual withal, and still "dead in trespasses and sins;" inasmuch as his

styled that best part of their intellect "the guiding intellect" Godwards, *νοῦς κυβερνήτης*. That is what the Apostle and Scripture in general call "the spirit" in man, that can be quickened into real life congenial to itself, only by the direct influence of the Spirit of God, and by intercourse with Him; but this cannot take place until God, as it were, looks down upon man; and this again is only when man looks up in faith to God, as to his Father reconciled through Christ.

But the soul of man (*ψυχή*), which, according to the same philosophers, is made up of intellect and feeling with divers affections and lusts, makes the man *ψυχικός*, or "natural," that is, intellectual, affectionate, feeling, but also sensual, and still alienated from the life of the Spirit which is in God, and altogether outside Him. Such is the *ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος*, or "natural man," as understood by the Apostle, and by the philosophers of his time; it is man endowed with the attributes and functions of the soul only, without the life of God. *Τρία δ' ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ, τὰ κύρια πράξεως καὶ ἀληθείας, αἴσθησις, νοῦς, ὄρεξις, κ.τ.λ.* (Eth. Nicom. vi. 2, 1, *seq.*)

[1] S. John iv. 23, 24.

intellect, which is, we see, distinct from his spirit, was given him as vice-regent of his Creator, over irrational animals that are only gifted with instinct, chiefly for his use during his life on earth, wherein his intellect works wonders, as being at home therein, and made for it.

So that, however vast or brilliant a man's intellect be, it can alone no more make him spiritual, than instinct can make an irrational animal into a rational man. Whence it is as clear as day, that for man to attempt spiritual truths and to look for spiritual influences through the intellect, which is another attribute of his nature, and has other functions,—for man's reason, in short, to attempt to understand God, "Who is past finding out," not only betrays ignorance of the first principles of philosophy, but is also proved, by daily experience, to be as far from man in the days of Atlantic cables as in those of Egyptian pyramids.

Thus, do we read in Scripture (1) of the spiritual man, of him who is ruled and governed by God's Holy Spirit in intercourse with his own, and who acts under His influence; (2) of the natural man, who is led by his soul, and is more or less intellectual, affectionate, moral, and sensual; and (3) of the carnal man, who is given to the gross appetites of his body, and is ruled by them alone. Therefore, also, do we hear (1) that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually —not intellectually—discerned;" and (2) that "the carnal mind is death."

Such was Abram when God called him, and thereby kindled within him a life to which he, Abram, had

hitherto been a stranger,—the life of the spirit, in intercourse with God. His spirit thus quickened with new but kindred life, with fresh energies and heavenly aspirations, strove to resume its sway over Abram's soul and body, and to silence the objections these two made to God's order to him; and it succeeded. Abram heard the call, believed, trusted, and obeyed. The whole thing was for him a reality. God, indeed, called him by virtue of the right to the calling Abram had in God's own foreknowledge, and in behalf of the blessing that rested on Shem. But when God called Abram, He also made him a special promise, which Abram believed, and towards which he walked. That promise was the object set before him, that made him leave Ur of the Chaldees, and which he kept ever present to his eyes during his journeyings across the wilderness; and the words in which the promise was told were the truth for Abram,—words, the truth, and a promise, which he neither invented nor discovered within himself, but all of which were given him of God, and which he therefore held fast as coming from Him.

Likewise, also, as regards God's Church. She holds the truths not only of God's promises, but of God's teaching, as objects before her, towards which she walks in faith, and for which she struggles with patience, endures, and at last overcomes. She holds and keeps those objective truths revealed to her in God's word, and cherishes the words in which they are told; but she does not make them. Did Abram make the promise? No; it was given him of God. Did he invent or discover "the day of Christ," and that "in him all nations of the earth should be

blessed"? No, those truths were revealed to Abram, and he made them his own only by receiving them with implicit faith.

So then, also, with us Christians; if we be worthy the name, and know the hope of our calling, we, too, walk by faith towards God's promise of an everlasting inheritance, to which He calls us out of the world by virtue of rights He gave us to this calling in His choice and foreknowledge. He does so of His own free will, and not for anything we either possessed or had done to deserve it of Him, since of our nature we are "children of wrath," and as much alienated from the life that is in Him, as were the worshippers of Cainan at Ur of the Chaldees. But the call, the promise, the inheritance, are all of Him; ay, the faith, as well as the strength of purpose to work in accordance to that faith, are from Him also.

We then walk towards God's promises, holding them before us as objective truths. For, since "in us dwelleth no good thing," and our natural "heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," we, as rational beings, draw hence the natural inference that in us there can be neither good nor truth but what God puts there; and that, therefore, the only kind of truth that can at all be called subjective—that is, in us and of us—is the consciousness, "through God's Spirit bearing witness with our spirit," that we make His promises our own, as Abram did, by faith and hope in them, and by our obedience to Him.

For, as to our natural conscience, what is it but, as it were, the echo of the voice once heard in Eden? And as to our reason, ask Socrates, ask Plato, Manu, Zerdhust, or Gautama,—ask whom you will,—its great-

est efforts are at best faint guesses at the truth which exists only in God, "Whose thoughts are not as our thoughts, and Whose ways are not as our ways," and Whom, therefore, reason alone and of itself can no more discover or find out, than Abram could have done it ere God appeared unto him, or than the wisest men of old ever did. No. "The things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, and that have not entered into the heart of man, which God hath prepared for them that love Him," must of necessity be revealed to man by Him. This Spirit and those things are of Him; not of the intellect, intellectual; but of the Spirit, spiritual, and spiritually discerned and enjoyed. If not, and if so be reason or intellect may take the place of faith, and assume the functions of the Spirit, how comes it that it has never yet done so, much as it has tried? And how is it that the holy Apostle, speaking of the wisdom of this world, calls it "foolishness with God," if so be man's intellect discerns things spiritual? And why are the wisest of those who had no other light than that of their own reason, said by the same Apostle to have "become fools, while professing themselves to be wise"? The answer is—It is not in man; it is of God.

God's call, says Holy Scripture, came to Abram at Ur of the Chaldees, where he dwelt with his father, Terah, and with the rest of his kindred. There, at the foot of the hills that gently slope down from the high table-land on the east of the Euphrates into the plains of Padan-Aram, skirted towards the sun-rising by the blue mountains of Ararat, and towards the south by heaven alone, lived that greatest of the sons of the East. There was Abram's home, the city—"el-beled"

of to-day,—at first, perhaps, a cluster of shepherds' tents, as Tyre was once of fishers' huts,—built, Ethiopic annals tell us, by Ur, son of Chesed, around the clear welling spring sacred to Tarhato, and embosomed in such luxuriant verdure as to have won for herself in after time the brilliant name of Edessa, "the green myrtle" of the East.[1] There lived Abram, with his father and brothers, in the primitive splendour of patriarchal life, rich in very much cattle, with few wants and few cares beyond the necessaries of life, which an exuberant soil yields without stint or toil; living unto

[1] "Hadassah," or "Adassa," according to local pronunciation, is the same as "Esther," which in Persian means "green myrtle," a name given to fair women (Esth. ii. 7) as well as to fair cities.

Four or five cities are said to be "Ur of the Chaldees;" a few more will probably soon be discovered. (1.) Mugheir, on the western bank of the Euphrates, in Babylonia; its claim rests on the name *Camarina*, that might also do for a town and a slough in Sicily: on the name *Ibra*, whence *Hebrew* (?): that would apply infinitely better to the *Iberians* of Georgia, and quite as well to those of Spain. (2.) Werka, on the eastern bank of the Euphrates; but Abraham would have had to cross the river twice on his way to Haran; and whether hence or from Mugheir, he would have to travel the whole length of Mesopotamia northwards, on his way to Canaan southwards. Somewhere hereabouts, however, his tomb is shown by Mahomedans; as they do that of Abel in Anti-Lebanon, that of Noah in Lebanon, of Eve in Arabia, etc. (3.) Ur, mentioned by Amm. Marcellinus, not far from Nisibis, in eastern Mesopotamia. (4.) The present Oorfa, ycleped Edessa, Roha, Callirrhoe, Chaldæopolis (?), Antioch, Erech, Justinopolis, Orhoe, the position of which suits best as regards Haran, distant from it about twenty miles. It was from the first noted for the beauty of its situation, and afterwards for its history, both civil and ecclesiastical. It has long been a place of pilgrimage, being fixed by tradition as the birthplace of Abram. The spot where his cradle lay is shown in a cave in the rock, enclosed within hallowed precincts, and overshadowed by magnificent plane-trees. Another cave, however, is also said by Arabic writers to exist on Mount Casius, near Damascus, where Abram saw the light. The probability, however, is in favour of

the day, careless of the morrow, and moving in a world that stretched very little beyond the limits which his eyes could reach.

"Hādha ardhi—this is the earth for me," said once a wealthy son of the desert, as he brought me out at the door of his tent, in which he had just fed me with the milk of his flock, and while he spread his hands towards the plain around his camp; "Hādha ardhi, this is my world." His ideas, his thoughts, went not beyond; outside that plain, on which his herds wandered at leisure and fed in peace, all was to him a wilderness; the desert alone was his inheritance; his tent of black hair, his home; his camp, his city; and the teeming flocks of sheep and goats, on which his eyes rested with pride, were his wealth, the yield of his toil, and the substance of his household.

Such a one was Terah; such a one also was his son Abram, whom God called, and whom He commanded to leave his home, his kindred, and his flocks—his all, in short, and to go far beyond his land, and the hazy line of the plain spread around him; that was all he

Oorfa, as the site of the Ur of the Chaldees, whence Abram started for Haran south, and thence went still further south to Canaan.

There are also two nations, the *Chaldi*, of Pontus, and the *Chaldæi*, of Assyria, that are called *Chaldæans*, or *Chaldees;* in Hebrew and in Chaldee, *Chasdim*, but in Syriac *Chaldoye*. Whence is this difference, and to which of these two did Abram's native city belong? We do not know. Yet a modern discoverer tells us that *Chaldees* is *Khaal-des*, or the country of "Khaal," a name of Shiva; that the "Do-ab" is only the Persian for "Mesopotamia," where we find *Terah-pur*, the city of Terah; *Mheysh-Ur*, "Ur of the Chaldees," in which was born Abram, ycleped *Eber-Ram:* all this either between the Nerbudda and the Taptee, or between the Nerbudda and the Indus! What next, and where? See 'The Rivers of Paradise,' by Major W. Stirling, p. 5, *seq.*

knew, and all he cared to know of the world; to go, he wist not where; albeit, he so far knew whither, as it was towards a country God had said He would show him when he once came to it.

Abram believed God, and Abram left his home.[1] He did not first consult with flesh and blood. His eyes did not pity the herds and flocks he would have to leave behind, nor the fertile plains on which he was wont to feed them. But the voice that called him sounded in his very heart; it carried with itself the witness of its own truth and reality, and of the truthfulness and faithfulness of Him that spake. And albeit, in the eyes of all around him, Abram did, no doubt, appear beside himself, when leaving his wealth and possessions for the distant prospect of a land he had never seen, and in which he would only be a stranger, yet, to him, the view by faith of that promised land was brighter than the sight of his own plains, and the promise made him of it was of more value than all he left behind, because it was God that promised. And Abram counted Him faithful.

Therefore did he trust Him, and therefore did he get himself ready to go. Terah, may be, shared in part, at least, his son's faith in God's promise; or, perhaps, grieving at the loss of Haran, whom he had just laid in one of the sepulchres at Ur that still faintly whisper his name, did he purpose to go with Abram as far as Haran, which he saw from Ur every day of his life at a short day's journey to the south, on the way to Canaan, and where he may have had either

[1] Πιστός γοῦν ὁ Ἀβραὰμ, ὅτι τῷ λαλοῦντι πεπίστευκε Θεῷ. Therefore was he called faithful, says S. Athanasius (Contra Ar. or. ii.), because he believed God speaking to him.

kindred or possessions; or, again, Abram may have prevailed upon him to follow him. Be this as it may, certain it is that Terah, being the head of the family, must be mentioned as making the move from Ur; and, accordingly, we are told that "he took Abram, his son, and Sarah, his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife, and they went forth with him from Ur of the Chaldees to go into the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran, and dwelt there."[1]

This plain statement of the fact, that God first called Abram out of Ur, and not out of Haran, and that Abram left "Ur of the Chaldees to go to Canaan," proves, it would seem, that Ur must have been to the north of Haran, otherwise Abram would have had to go several hundred miles north, and then as many south, besides crossing the river twice,—a very round-about way indeed for him to take in obedience to God's order. Such an assumption refutes itself, and leaves bare the witness of Scripture, which is confirmed by several other passages of Holy Writ. God Himself said to Abram, in the land of Canaan, "I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it."[2] There was no doubt of it among Abram's posterity, for at the solemn feast held at Jerusalem after the captivity, the Levites began their public prayer by saying, "Thou art the Lord God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees."[3] Can we suppose this would be thus stated, at such a time, and by such men, if it were not true? So also S. Stephen, in his last confession before the High Priest, in council assembled, bade him and his assessors hearken to these

[1] Gen. xi. 31. [2] Gen. xv. 7. [3] Neh. ix. 7.

words:—"The God of Glory appeared unto our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and he said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee;"[1] words which the holy Confessor and Martyr would assuredly not have spoken, had they not been true, and known of all to be true.

For (1) whichever of the three or four cities that have the best claim to be called Ur of the Chaldees we may choose, matters not; they were all three in the Aram-Naharaim of old, the Naharan of Egyptian monuments, the Mesopotamia of Greek and of Latin writers;[2] so that (2) S. Stephen spoke accurately, not only according to facts, but also according to the common geographical ideas of his time. And lastly, to these inspired witnesses, we may add also the testimony of other men, such as the author of the Book of Judith,[3] who quotes Achior, captain of the hosts of Ammon, that said to Holofernes, when he asked him who the Jews were: "This people are descended from the Chaldæans, and they sojourned heretofore in Mesopotamia,—and sojourned there many days. Then their God commanded them to depart from the place where they so-

[1] Acts vii. 2, 3.

[2] Those who, for the sake of novelty, find Haran at Harran-el-Awāmīd, near Damascus, and thus place Mesopotamia between the two comparatively insignificant streams, Baroda and el-Awāj, unwittingly renew the pretended discovery of Harduin in the seventeenth century, that was then exploded by Cellarius. But they must also place Ur of the Chaldees there; and moreover, also bear in mind that there are two or three more Harans to be examined, on the assumption on their part that the Charræ where Crassus was defeated is different from the Charran mentioned in Acts vii.

[3] Chap. v. 5.

journed, and to go into the land of Chanaan." To which we may also add another historian of nearly the same date, Josephus, who agrees with Achior, S. Stephen, the Levites in the Temple, and Moses himself, in saying that Abram left Ur of the Chaldees, by the will of God, Who ordered him to do so.[1]

The fact then abides that Abram—whether or not he were, as Eastern traditions have it, a worshipper of idols, or had, being a Shemite, a lingering knowledge of the true God—left Ur of the Chaldees at God's behest to go to Canaan, and that on his way thither he tarried awhile at Haran, where his father Terah died. For it was only after his death that "Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot, his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of Canaan they came."[2]

This was his last farewell to his father's house, and to the land of his birth; to the woodlands of Ur, which he might see from the mound of Haran, and to the range of Ararat, that bound him by the spell of his younger days to their long-loved and familiar outline. He now bid farewell to all these things which linked the threescore and fifteen years of his past existence with the soil of Aram, and he now turned his back upon all those fond objects of his childhood, youth, and manhood, and his face towards a new and untried country—a country far off and unknown.

We may picture to ourselves Abram leaving Haran; his camels laden with his chattels; his flocks and herds gathered together for the last time, as if to bid them

[1] Antiq. Jud. lib. vii. 1. [2] Gen. xii. 5.

farewell, in trust to the herdsmen of Nahor, and a few sheep and goats only under the charge of his own shepherds for his food on the journey—all assembled together around the well of Nahor at sunset; the sheep and goats bleating, the camels kneeling by the water-troughs, which the men are busy filling from the well, for the last time before the final start at dawn, —all strangers to Abram's feelings at this trying hour. This, we may say, was the human side of that memorable farewell. All the rest was divine: the motive, the means, the departure were of God. Abram alone knew it, and felt it; he had counted the cost; it was to deny himself and to believe God; and then to obey Him. And he did obey Him.[1]

Grave, then, of the gravity of faith that falters not, and solemn in the deep, unshaken purpose of his determined choice to risk all that he then saw and held dear, his land and his possessions in it, for a promise afar off, indeed, but made by God,—did Abram move among his household, to give orders to his servants to make ready; did he watch for the last time the lingering rays of the setting sun on the distant mountains of Ararat; the dim shadows of evening spread over the plain, and the stars twinkle one by one in the clear sky above, as witnesses of his faith in God, and of the promise God had made him. Truly did one of Abram's children, who had received the promise made to his father, say, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."[2]

[1] "Magnus planè vir, et multarum virtutum clarus insignibus, quem votis suis philosophia non potuerit æquare. Denique minus est quod illa finxit quam quod iste gessit, majorque ambitioso eloquentiæ mendacio simplex veritatis fides." True, beautiful words of S. Ambrose, De Abrah. Patr. lib. i. c. 2. [2] 1 S. John v. 4.

CHAPTER II.

ABRAHAM'S JOURNEY TO CANAAN.

THEY left at dawn, and from that moment there was, and there could be, no delay. "None," says S. Ambrose,[1] "but Abram went on until he came to Sichem." "He hastened to follow God," says Philo,[2] "and to obey His commands, counting as such not only what things were made known to him by word and deed, but also what his own innate perception gave him to understand in a much clearer manner than what he received by hearing." In the words of Scripture, "they went forth to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of Canaan they came."[3]

Onwards, then, to the southward, by slow marches to suit the pace of the flocks, of the women, and of the little ones, day by day across the boundless plain of Aram-Naharaim, until they came to the mighty stream

[1] "Paruit itaque mandato Abraham, nec ulla legitur mora intervenisse." (S. Ambr. De Abrah. Patr. lib. i. c. 1.)

[2] Ἐσπούδασεν ἕπεσθαι Θεῷ καὶ καταπειθὴς εἶναι τοῖς προσταττομένοις, κ. τ. λ. (Philo, De Abrah. p. 358.)

[3] Gen. xii. 5.

of the Euphrates, that seemed to bar the way of all further progress.

Every other man, says Philo, would have been daunted, and would have either retraced his steps or lingered on the banks of the great river rather than venture across. But not Abram. No danger could daunt him; no obstacle could hinder his march. What! go back, and thus forfeit the promise, lose the sight of that pleasant land, and, above all, doubt God's word and deny Him? Not Abram. He then, as afterwards, "staggered not through unbelief, but was strong in the faith," giving glory to God. At a glance he scanned the deep and wide river that rolled at his feet; he saw the risk; he faced the danger, but quailed not; and no sooner had he wetted the sole of his feet in the stream in obedience to the call that urged him onwards, than—the stream did not retreat as at another entrance into the promised land, for Abram was to brave the danger and to cross the river, but—he heard the same voice that had called him out of Ur, say to him, "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee."[1] And Abram crossed in safety;[2] the Lord was with him.

And on he went, with his small band, across the

[1] Is. xiii. 2.

[2] Abram crossed the Euphrates most probably at the fords near ancient Thapsacus (Strabo, lib. xvi. c. 5, 23), in as straight a line as possible from Haran to Canaan. In those days the new Haran near Damascus had not yet been discovered; nor was any of the two or three other Harans built.

desert of Tadmor. Every step he took on the way to Canaan was a triumph of his faith, and an act of obedience that made his faith perfect. His faith in God, then, gave him strength unto his day, and God's care of him, His faithful and obedient servant, was to that servant a shield from danger, and his safety from all harm. Abram, with all his flocks and all the souls he had gotten in Haran, after crossing the river, "passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land."[1]

This is all we know about it. And there is something so grand, so earnest, so true, and so solemn in Abram's march onwards, through rivers and across deserts, regardless of difficulties, but always in the direction in which God pointed, and in no other, until he came to the land God had shown him, that it reads like a joke, very much out of place it must be owned, to be told by men not acquainted with Scripture, that Abram went to Canaan by a round-about way, amusing himself the while in conquering countries from Aleppo to Mecca. That stories about him should be rife in the East is but natural, and that Arabic, Latin, and Greek writers should indulge in such fancies, is not to be wondered at; but it is wonderful that Christians should, as it shows that they are utter strangers to Abram's faith, and to the single motive of his obedience, wrought in him by the faith that urged him onwards. "Straight ahead," says Philo, "counting his readiness to obey on a par with his arrival in the promised land."

But such assumptions also betray great ignorance of

[1] Gen. xii. 6.

even the letter of Holy Writ. For therein we read that (1) "Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed out of Haran;"[1] (2) that he was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ismael to him;"[2] that is, eleven years after he had left Haran, and one year after Sarai had given him Hagar. Now we find (3) that "Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife,"[3] whence it results clearly, that since out of those eleven years, ten years were spent in Canaan, Abram must have left Haran and come to Canaan, or he must even have passed through Canaan and come to Egypt within one twelvemonth. For it is most probable that Sarai brought Hagar with her from her visit at Pharaoh's court, even if the tradition be not true, that she received her at his hands. But if we understand the words "had dwelt" to refer to his permanent stay in Canaan, that began after his return from Egypt, then his visit at the court of Pharaoh must have been even shorter than we are wont to think,—not much time assuredly, for his teaching astrology to the priests of On, as certain writers of the day do not scruple to tell us.

No delay then, but that of the least time and of the shortest distance, intervened between Abram's departure from Haran and his arrival in Canaan; and no other conquest marked his progress, we may be sure, than the greatest conquest of all—that of self, in obedience to God through faith. This did make Abram "really great," says S. Ambrose, "and adorned with many brilliant virtues which the fondest dreams of

[1] Gen. xii. 4. [2] Ch. xvi. 16. [3] Ch. xvi. 3.

philosophy never equalled; for, less by far, is what philosophers planned than what Abraham alone wrought."[1]

"We are not only told," says S. Chrysostom,[2] that "Abram departed," but that "he departed as the Lord had spoken unto him." He did fully everything commanded him. God told him to leave all he had, his kindred and his house, and he left them. God told him to go to a land he did not know, and he went; God promised to bless him and to make him a great nation, and Abram believed that this also should be. So then, as the Lord God had spoken unto him, so did he depart, that is,—he neither wavered nor doubted, but, with his mind made up, and his reasons for and against silenced and settled within him, he left Haran; neither his age, nor any other of the many things that might have induced him to remain at home, did detain him; for his love for God and his desire to obey Him overcame them all;—so that, although stricken in years, he, like a man in the prime of life, tore asunder all the bonds that tied him to his native land, and would brook neither delay nor hindrance in his yearnings to work out the order God had given him. Wherefore, also, did he receive great favour from the Lord."

[1] See above, p. 43, note. [2] In Gen. xii. Homil. xxxi.

CHAPTER III.

ABRAHAM IN CANAAN.

No sooner had Abram set foot in Canaan proper, than the Lord, Whom he had so faithfully obeyed, appeared unto him, and made His former general promise more definite. When called from Ur of the Chaldees, Abram then left in obedience, and walked by faith towards the land God would show him; he was now in that land, and God, Who had called and led him thither, through deserts and across wide rivers, did not leave him an instant in doubt, but at once appeared unto him and said: This is the land I promised thee. "Unto thy seed will I give this land."

Why not unto Abram himself? It could not be, surely, to disappoint him; for He Who called Abram "His friend," Who told him that all nations should be blessed in him, must have had some good and sufficient reason for thus apparently keeping His servant waiting a yet longer time for the possession of the land in which he was told he should only be a stranger.

The reason was this: Abram was to be a pattern of believers; his whole life was to be the working out of his faith; he, therefore, was to sojourn in the land promised him, but in which he had not where to set his foot, and must even buy a field in which to bury his dead. Had the land been given him at once, and had he thus received the actual return for the dangers and fatigue of his journey at the end of it, and had the land become his, even Abram might have been cumbered with the cares of it, and his faith might have grown weaker instead of stronger, when he seemed to have reached and received the object that had made him leave his native country.

So God did not give him the land to which He had brought him; He only promised to give it to His posterity; but He abundantly rewarded Abram, His servant, in that land that was not his own, and in which he was to live and to die a stranger, or at best a sojourner. God appeared to him at sundry times, making Himself known more and more intimately, and with greater and more evident proofs of His love and of His care for Abram, as Abram continued to walk with Him by faith, and in hope that rested on that faith. In that same land, where he owned nothing, was he yet the richest man, and though surrounded with wild and lawless tribes, he was yet more powerful than they. The Lord was his shield and his exceeding great reward. Surely this was enough. Thus protected, Abram had nothing to fear; and thus rewarded, he owned heaven and earth. He had Him for his friend Who made and Who rules both.

And as the Lord appeared unto Abram at his first coming into Canaan, so also did Abram build there his

first altar unto Him—to renew his covenant with Him by sacrifice. What sacrifice? and who had taught him to offer it? He who had taught Abel? or was it in him the force of instinct, with power of an endless life; or, may be, the simple rite of a wide, all-embracing worship that took in the Lord Who had called him from Ur of the Chaldees, and Cainan or Belshamen, he had seen worshipped around him there? Abram saw—but how? "Faith is the evidence of things not seen." Abram then "saw the day of Christ and rejoiced;" he saw Him afar off, indeed, like the Morning Star in that early dawn,—yet he saw The Sacrifice offered of which the lamb he slew upon the altar his hands had raised, was but a faint image. This was Abram's sacrifice; it was an offering of thanksgivings, an act of faith, a pledge of love and of obedience on his part, whose whole life since his call from Ur, was "a living sacrifice," which he accounted to be his "reasonable service" unto God, Who had thus loved and chosen and called, and led and guided and saved him—ay, and made him His friend,—in Him and through Him alone, "Whose day Abram saw, and rejoiced."

Abram was now in Canaan, a sojourner among warlike and accursed tribes, with which he could have nothing in common beyond the bare courtesies of mutual intercourse. But of reciprocal feeling there could be none; for he was the friend and servant of the living God, Whom those tribes had forsaken and entirely forgotten. Abram, however, moved among them securely; the Lord was his shield and defender, and led him first, after his halt at the oak of Moreh, to the rocky heights and narrow glens that lie between Bethel on the west and Hai on the east; and there

Abram again built an altar unto the Lord.[1] He could not tarry anywhere "in the land of his sojournings" without raising an altar on which to renew the covenant for which alone he lived, and that severed him and his household from the Amorites around.

But there was a famine in the land at the time, and, as a famine also drove Abram's children in after years from Canaan to Egypt for food, it seems as if he, too, should now repair thither for the same purpose. Both he and they, being examples of the Church of Christ, were to be called out of Egypt back to Canaan, which to both was also the promised land,—first, promised, believed in, hoped for, and then given.

We do not know who the Pharaoh[2] was to whose court Abram came, nor where that court was held; whether it was Avaris or Tanis, or at On; and whether that Pharaoh was of Egyptian or of Amalekite descent; whether he was Pepj, or Apophis, or some other of the so-called Shepherd Kings. And as it is vain to speculate on a date which has been differently fixed

[1] "Ubi Bethel, id est domus Dei, ibi et ara. Ubi ara, ibi et invocatio Dei nostri." (S. Ambr. De Abrah. lib. i. c. 2.)

[2] *Pharaoh*, or more correctly *Pharaa* or *Paraa*, meant "the King," as alone entitled to wear in his crown the badge of royalty, a golden figure of the *ara*, or *aṛaa*, the *uræus*, or royal serpent, called basilisk, which, being thought immortal, was thus venerated as an emblem of immortality, and was thus worn by kings, not only in token of their right, thought to be divine, but also in proof of their power of life and death over their subjects. *Pharaoh* has been said by some to come from *Phra*, "the Sun;" but albeit the kings of Egypt were often addressed thus by their subjects, who also styled them rulers of the nine regions of all nations, and of the whole world, etc., yet *Phra* cannot be made into *Phraa*, or *Pharao*, consistently with Egyptian and with Hebrew grammar. There is also another etymology offered, viz. *Per-aa*, "great house," but this is far-fetched and improbable.

by almost every one who has attempted to do so, we have only the statement contained in Scripture, which gives us no clue whatever either to the Egyptian sovereign whom Abram visited, or to the royal city where that sovereign lived,—although we may believe this to have been Avaris, also called Tsan or Tanis, the residence of the Sasū or Arab kings called Shepherds.

The surmise that Abram visited Egypt at this period has by some been thought probable, from the similarity of manners at the court of this Pharaoh[1] and at that of Abimelech, king of Gerar;[2] but there is nothing characteristic of Arab, Egyptian, or Amalekite customs in that; such things were and are still done at other courts also, though perhaps not in the same way. Man's heart left to itself, and unrestrained by the fear of God, is the same now as when Abram had, in self-defence, to practise the "craft" of telling his wife to pass in Egypt for his sister,[3] as she really was according to the custom of a country where every elderly man is either "father" or "uncle," every aged woman a "mother," and every younger man or woman is "brother" and "sister" or "daughter." Abram's device succeeded as far as himself was concerned; and as to Sarai, God protected her from harm at the court of Pharaoh, who, tradition says, gave her Hagar as maid-servant, and sent her and Abram away, back to Canaan. There they dwelt in the south with Lot and all he had, and thence they removed to their former halting-place, between Hai and Bethel, "unto the place of the altar which Abram had made at the first; and there he called upon the name of the Lord."

Here also took place the separation between Abram

[1] Gen. xii. 11, *seq.* [2] Ch. xx. 2, *seq.* [3] Gen. xx. 12.

and Lot.[1] The land, it is said, was not able to bear them that they should dwell together, "by reason of their flocks, and of the strife that occasionally took place among their shepherds." Abram, therefore, as the greater of the two, and as heir-presumptive to the whole country, gave the choice of the land to his nephew, who was not so much blessed, as Abram, and rather, perhaps, for Abram's sake than for his own; and they parted. Lot chose the "plain of Jordan, that was well watered everywhere before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord;" and Abram, at God's bidding, walked through the length and through the breadth of the land as the future lord of it in his posterity,—hardly, as S. Ephraem says, to mark it even then with the figure of the Cross, but in order to take possession of it in the name of Him who promised it.

As long as Abram and Lot were only wandering from place to place in Canaan, they continued together; but now that Abram had returned to dwell therein, he was alone "to walk before God," since to him and to his seed were the promises made. The father of Isaac and of Jacob, and of the families of Israel, the chosen people, could no longer live in close fellowship with the father of Moab and Ammon; and so they parted, Lot to dwell among the palm groves and fertile meadows of the same plain that was anon to be destroyed by fire from heaven; but Abram, to enter upon the chequered life of a sojourner among the stony downs

[1] Those who like to see everything in the letter of Scripture spiritualized, after the manner of Origen, and with the most pious and devoted feeling, may find this part of Abraham's history thus treated by S. Ambrose. (De Abr. Patr. lib. ii. c. 6.)

of Canaan, wherein, however, he should walk with God. Lot chose this world, and was saved as by fire from the general overthrow; while Abram chose the world to come, and made the Lord alone his exceeding great reward. As the Father of God's Church Militant here in earth, he had to move among hostile and heathen tribes; but his ways pleased the Lord, and the Lord made his enemies to be at peace with him. This is the real cause of the apparent amity between him and his hosts; not, in sooth, a common worship or a fellow-feeling; even though confederate with them for mutual safety.[1] There is no concord between Christ and Belial; how then could it exist between Abram, who rejoiced to see the day of Christ, and the Hittite worshippers of Sutech, or those of Moloch or Baal? No such union can be, except as a feint,—it cannot be real and hearty on the part of those who fain would lower the Church to the earth, level her fences, and make one world of this and of the next. But Baal is to fall with his host; they cannot enter into fellowship with Christ. "The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day, and the idols he shall utterly abolish."

[1] Ch. xiv. 13.

CHAPTER IV.

ABRAHAM AT MAMRE.—MELCHIZEDEK.

ALONE, then, in faith, in hope, in worship, Abram "removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the Lord." The two friends could not part; where Abram pitched his tent and spread his camp around it, there the Lord had His altar, to bless, to keep and save the household, and to give Abram victory over kings. For while he dwelt at Mamre, one that was escaped from the slaughter in the plain of Sodom, came and told him how Chedorlaomer and his confederate kings had fought with the kings of Sodom and of the country round, and had taken Lot and his family captive, and carried them away. "And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued and smote the kings unto Dan and unto Hobah, which is on the left-hand of Damascus, and he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother

Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people."

A true picture this of desert life among Arab chieftains of the present day, who, on a sudden alarm, lay down the shepherd's staff, grasp the spear, and on horseback or on foot pursue their rivals, and fight out their quarrel until one or the other yield. Abram, who could arm three hundred and eighteen of his trained servants, born in his house, besides those he must have left behind to watch his own camp, where Sarai stayed, must have been a great man among these lords of the desert. God had prospered him abundantly, because Abram served Him faithfully; and, like Job, he was rich in very much cattle, and in a numerous household. In fact, the best representative we can have of the patriarch Abram is an Arab sheikh, now moving in his camp among his underlings, in intercourse with the principal men of his tribe, counting his sheep, his goats, and his cattle, or even following them into the open country; and then, perhaps, at the head of his men, sallying forth for a raid on a neighbouring clan. The appearance, the dress, the customs, the language, are all very little altered since Abram's time in a land where time alters nothing. The only difference is, that whereas Abram was the servant and friend of God, these wandering Arabs acknowledge and serve no one but themselves.

We cannot, however, picture to ourselves, "the friend of God, Ibrahim el-Khalîl," his address, his manner, his hospitality, the shape, measure, and colour of his tent, anywhere but in a camp of Bedaween of the true breed, on the eastern side of Jordan, on Mount Gilead, and also further east, at Haran,

and in the desert itself. There we see the very words of Scripture true to the letter; there we are brought into the patriarch's tent, and converse with him while fed in the lordly dish with bread and milk, and butter of his flock. There we see him "sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day," an awning that shelters him from the desert sun, and that serves as reception-room for his guests; there we may see him "hastening unto the tent to Sarah" into the portion of the tent allotted to his wife, and parted from the open awning only by a curtain of the same coarse cloth as the rest of the tent; and we may hear him say to Sarah, "Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth;" and there also may we be greeted by the chieftain himself, who, with a graceful bow and wave of the hand, bids us welcome to his tent: "Marhabā," Welcome! "Ṣalām 'aleik," peace be on thee; "Tfaddhal," deign to come in to thy servant,—touches of life found everywhere in Abram's land, that tell us, even at this day, that there he must have lived, and that the word written there was then, as it now is, still true.

Abram, the chieftain, then, sallied forth from his camp at Mamre, at the head of his men,—a figure of the Church Militant here in earth,—pursued the kings, defeated them, and rescued from them Lot and his family, and was met on his return by the king of Sodom "at the valley of Shaveh, which is the King's dale;" where also "Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine. He was the priest of the Most High God, and he blessed Abram, and said, Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, possessor

of heaven and earth." And Abram gave him tithes of all.[1]

"Consider, then, how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abram gave the tenth of the spoils." Great, indeed,—"king of Salem, priest of the Most High God,"—mysterious; "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life,"—and mystical; "first being by interpretation king of righteousness, and after that also king of Salem, which is king of peace;" "made like unto the Son of God, who abideth a priest for ever." So great was he that of him "the Lord said unto my Lord, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."[2] Like the Son of God, and the Son of God like unto him! It seems as if we, dim-sighted beings, longed to lift up the veil that shrouds this interview,—not of natural with revealed religion;—but of the Eternal High Priest, of the Prince of Peace to Whose dominion there will be no end, thus greeting and blessing His Church militant and triumphant over His enemies and her own. And where does He meet her? In Shaveh, in "a lowland" nigh unto His own City, Jerusalem, the city of the great King, the city on earth which is eternal in the heavens. It is there that He offers her bread and wine, to strengthen and refresh her in her conflict, as He also did afterwards in the same place, when He taught her what that bread and wine were meant to represent and to be for her, shortly before His Body was broken and His Blood was shed for her sake there, nigh the King's

[1] Gen. xiv. 17, 18, 19.

[2] Ps. cx. 1–4; Heb. v. 6; vi. 20; vii. 17–21.

dale, in the lowest abasement, and in the deepest humility of Him the King of kings, when He, who is her High Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek, gave Himself up as a ransom for her; and through that one sacrifice of Himself once offered gave her then "the power of an endless life."[1] And she in return gives Him the tenth of her income as an acknowledgment, as a due, as a small offering of worship, of love, and of thanksgivings. This shadow, the body of which is of Christ, is plain enough.

Neither will she for the sake of gain make an agreement with the world. She blesses, she gives, she does not sell; what she does is for her Master's sake. The king of Sodom said unto Abram: "Give me the persons and take the goods for thyself." And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from thee a shoe-latchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich."

But of "the King's dale," in which this touching and mysterious interview took place, we know nothing certain. It is mentioned only once more, in 2 Sam. xviii. 18, where we read that Absalom reared for himself a pillar, or monument, in "the King's dale." If, as some say, Absalom's tomb, as it is called, in the valley of Jehoshaphat, by the brook Kedron, be the monument alluded to, the site of "the King's dale" would thus be fixed in accordance with the universal opinion of the Church, whether Jewish or Christian, that Jerusalem is meant by the

[1] S. Aug. De Civ. Dei, lib. xvi. c. 22.

Salem of which Melchizedek was both king and high-priest. Such a city, the figure of the heavenly Jerusalem, that was to become "the joy of the whole earth," as being the scene of the redemption of the Church by the Son of God appearing in the flesh, could never have been first built accidentally, and then desecrated by heathenish rites, ere it was chosen by God to put His Name there. But, rather, it seems more consistent with His whole design to suppose that He chose it from the first, and caused it to be built for Himself; and when we further consider the appearance of Melchizedek, the sacrifice of Isaac, the temple, the City of David and Zion, we are led to think it very possible that Melchizedek, who was both king and priest, reared the first stones thereof, and then called it Salem, the City of Peace.[1]

[1] The tradition mentioned by Eupolemus, that Melchizedek was priest of an altar on Mount Gerizim, is of a very late date, and the inference drawn thence, that Mount Gerizim was from the first a kind of national altar, unto which all Canaan gathered, and at which Melchizedek ministered, is, I need hardly say, without any foundation whatever. Mount Tabor, owing both to its shape, to its height, and to its isolated position, might, with greater probability, have been a common "tryst" for solemn festivals; and accordingly, S. Athanasius mentions the tradition that Melchizedek lived there and not on Mount Gerizim. Since, however, Melchizedek is not even alluded to in the 'Samaritan Chronicle,' that professes to describe the doings of Joshua, and in which Mount Gerizim is extolled above all other mountains, we need not tarry by these later inventions. So that we have nothing whatever but the words of Scripture, whereon to rest our faith respecting this mysterious high-priest; as we have no reason for saying that Salem, yclept Jerusalem, was not the seat of his kingdom.

CHAPTER V.

ABRAHAM'S RIGHTEOUSNESS, WHICH IS BY FAITH.

I.

ABRAM thence returned to Mamre; and after these things the word of the Lord came unto him in a vision, saying: "Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward."[1] As Abram walked longer with God, did God's intercourse with him become more and more intimate, and His promises brighter, richer, and more explicit; and the Lord now promised to Abram that He would be his shield and his exceeding great reward. As to the Lord's defence and protection, Abram had already felt and seen it, whether across the wilderness and among lawless tribes at enmity one with another; through rivers, in war even, the Lord had warded off danger from him, and had protected him. But Abram had not yet seen the promised reward. He therefore asked, not doubting or complaining,—he was inca-

[1] Gen. xv. 1.

pable of either,—but he asked honestly: "Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go childless? Behold, to me Thou hast given no seed, and one born in my house is mine heir."[1] How, indeed, could the promise be thus ratified? Neither a servant, nor yet one born of the bond-woman, could be heir of the promise and become the seal thereof; none but the son of the free woman could inherit and continue the blessing entailed on Abram's posterity. The Lord, therefore, said to Abram: "This shall not be thine heir;" thine own son shall be thine heir. Come forth and "look now towards heaven, and tell the stars, if thou canst number them; so shall thy seed be." Not a doubt on Abram's part; not a word, not a question, though the promise seemed impossible; yet not impossible to Him that promised. And as He is both almighty and faithful, Abram "believed in the Lord, and He counted it to him for righteousness."[2]

This was such a trial of Abram's faith that his faith alone in what God said was counted to him for righteousness. Hitherto Abram had believed God, but not against hope. He was told to leave Ur and to go towards another country; but the country was there, and every day brought Abram nearer to it, until he at last reached it, and his faith was then exchanged for sight. Every step he took on his way to Canaan was not only a proof of his faith in God's promise, but it also helped to keep that faith alive,

[1] Ac. Köver, following the Armenian version, made from the LXX., calls Eliezer "the son of Masek, who was one of Abraham's house-born servants." (Desutiün Badm. Asdw. vol. i. p. 48.)

[2] Ver. 5, 6.

through the hope that he was daily getting nearer its fulfilment. But in this case Abram had no human reason to think the promise of a posterity possible. The possibility thereof rested entirely on God's power and faithfulness. In other words, Abram, as S. Paul says, "against hope believed in hope,"[1] "being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, nor yet the deadness of Sarah's womb. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully persuaded that what He had promised He was able also to perform; and therefore it was imputed to Him for righteousness."

II.

How was it imputed, "counted or reckoned unto him for righteousness,"—an expression we find in connection with no other act of Abram's faith? "Abraham," we read, "believed the Lord, who counted it to him for righteousness and," adds S. James, "he was called the friend of God;"[2] while S. Paul tells us that "Abraham's faith—not his belief—was reckoned to him for righteousness."[3] What difference, then, is there between "belief" and "faith"?

In common use, "I believe" implies only assent of the intellect; and from habit it is also made to mean "I doubt," or "I think." But originally "to believe," if it come from the Anglo-Saxon *gelyfan*, means "to allow," or "to surrender" oneself, one's own will, or opinion; and if *gelyfan* come, as it most probably does, from the Gothic *ga-laubjan*, "to

[1] Rom. iv. 3, 19, *seq.* [2] S. James ii. 23. [3] Rom. iv. 9.

trust," as from *laubjan*,—itself possibly allied to *lubjan*, "to love,"—we see that when Abram "believed God" he surrendered his ideas, his opinion, and his will, his whole self in short, with trust and love; all of which make up "faith," *fiducia simplex*, and *fides;* a term adopted to express the turning of the heart towards God with trust, and therefore with belief in Him and with love for Him; both inseparable from trust. "Faith," then, is by comparison and as consecrated by use, "to believe with the heart,"[1] and "in the heart," whereas "belief" implies only assent of the intellect. "My belief is" and "my faith is" are two very different expressions in the present state of the language. Here, however, we will take the words Abram "believed God" in their literal sense.

Abram, then, was by God accounted right, righteous, or just, for believing His word or promise, and for nothing else. As he believed against all human reasoning and all human hope that in him all nations should be blessed, he, by that one act of faith, silenced all objections of the flesh, denied himself entirely, and acknowledged as Truth not his own ideas as to the possibility of his having a son, but only the word and promise of God. Abram, in short, set himself entirely aside, and all other human considerations besides. He neither yet saw nor understood how what God promised should come to pass; but he rested his hope of a family, however improbable or impossible it might appear to his own mind, and the world-wide blessing that was attached to it—on God's power, on His promise, and on His faithfulness. "Abram's faith," says S. Ambrose, "was counted to him for

[1] Rom. x. 9, 10.

righteousness, because he asked no reason, but at once yielded implicit faith. And it is well that faith should come first, that the reason for the order given be heard, not from man, but from God."[1]

III.

Abram's faith, then, was a whole, unreserved surrender of self, spirit, soul, and body to God; and since without this it is impossible to please Him, Abram in so doing was accounted just or righteous before God. He was, in short, justified,—that is, considered by God to come up to the just or exact standard required of Him in order that He might hold intercourse with Abram and establish His covenant with him. And this was by that simple act of implicit and "true faith, which alone," says S. Ambrose, made him worthy of God;"[2] because by thus believing wholly what God told him relatively to the promised atonement by Christ, however dimly portrayed, Abram received from God and through faith Christ's righteousness, which was thus imputed or reckoned to him for his believing against his reason and only for God's sake.

In that faith alone lay Abram's one plea to his being thus held righteous before God, and ere he could have wrought any other work whatever in proof of it, but the act of faith itself. So that the faith that was counted unto Abram for righteousness bore, in God's estimation, witness of its own truth. But inasmuch as there could be neither merit nor efficacy in the mere act of the belief which Abram granted to

[1] De Patr. Abr. lib. i. c. 8.

[2] Ad Rom. ii. "Fide, perquam dignus Deo extitit Abraham."

God's word,[1] his righteousness must have come from something else of which he became possessed, endowed, or clothed upon by means of that act of faith, and this was the righteousness or "justness" of the Saviour implied in the promise. For He alone is "the Lord our righteousness:" there is none else.

Abram's merit could lie, and lay, in nothing else. It was assuredly not in any power of his own, since he said to God, that as He had given him no child he had given up all hope of an heir. Neither could Abram claim any merit for raising up his eyes unto heaven, when God bade him look up at the firmament spangled with more brilliant stars than twinkle anywhere else, as muster of his future family; for this was more likely to stagger than to convince Abram's reason. There was, then, no time for any other act on Abram's part than that of simple belief and trust—that is, of faith—in God's promise of a thing humanly impossible, but possible with Him, and that implied the redemption of the world by Christ. Abram's righteousness, then, at that moment lay in his honest belief in what God said, and in his implicit trust in Him; and in nothing else.

IV.

We see, then, clearly, that Abram's justification by faith came first, and before God's covenant with him. Such a covenant could neither be made by God nor

[1] "*M.* Non ergo inter hujus justitiæ causas fidem principem locum tenere dicis, ut ejus merito nos ex nobis justi coram Deo habeamur? —*A.* Nequaquam; id enim esset fidem in Christi locum substituere. Verum hujus justitiæ fons est Dei misericordia, quæ in nos per Christum derivatur, per Evangelium vero nobis offertur, et a nobis fide, quasi manu, prehenditur." (A. Nowelli Catech. p. 114, ed. Oxf.)

received by Abram unless they two were together on terms of union and of friendly intercourse; and this could only be through faith on Abram's part in the atonement and reconciliation wrought for him by Christ, "Whose day he saw, and rejoiced," and through Whom and for Whose sake alone God made the covenant with Abram, whom He called His friend, and with whom He held sweet intercourse.

All that never could have been while God and Abram were strangers to each other; but it all immediately followed upon faith. Abram's belief and trust in God's promise created at once in his heart a new state of things, and brought about consequences as inevitable and as intimately connected with that sincere belief and trust in God's word of love and of reconciliation, as heat and light are in the sunbeam. The moment Abram turned towards God in simple faith, "and had an eye unto Him, he was lightened, and his face was not ashamed;"[1] for God answered Him in a ray of His Spirit. And then began a new intercourse, an unbroken communion between God and Abram. God's Spirit was "shed abroad" in Abram's heart, and thus quickened his spirit[2] into a new life, which it now drew in a ceaseless flow directly from God Himself.

For the Holy Spirit is given only to them that believe, as "a seal of their faith;"[3] "it is," says S. Ambrose,[4] "a sign or token of justification by faith;

[1] Ps. xxxiv.

[2] "The true Christian," says S. Athanasius (Quæst. ad Ant. 2), "learns not from what others say, but from the experience and quickening of his own heart, and from the joy of his soul, that he has indeed received the Holy Spirit at baptism."

[3] Eph. i. 23. [4] Ap. Rom. c. 8.

and the fact that the Spirit of God dwells in the heart of a man, is itself a proof that such a one is already justified and a child of God." And this spirit of adoption and of love thus shed abroad, teaches the heart to covet the act of whole and unreserved surrender of "self" to God, made by faith, as a pleasure that becomes greater and greater as the intercourse between God's Spirit and man's spirit increases, and becomes more constant and intimate; thus creating obedience, which is submission in love to God's will. Thus does it happen that the Spirit which is shed abroad in the heart as seal of that hearty faith, helps and keeps up the life of that faith; so truly is "faith a fruit of the Spirit," that leads us "from faith to faith" by "guiding us into all truth." And from henceforth the two remain interwoven, the Spirit as warp, and faith as woof, in the web of love that binds the heart to God, and that makes for it the beginning of eternal life.

Abram's faith and his self-denial then, did not, like a flash of lightning, last an instant and then disappear, leaving him in greater gloom than he was before; but the fire thus kindled in him from heaven went on burning bright. He continued more and more readily to silence his own objections and feelings, to bring them into subjection to the will of God, and to deny himself; and, as he believed the promise made by God for God's sake only, so also did he trust in it, hope for it, even against all human hope, for God's sake also; and for God's sake also waited patiently for the promise, until God should fulfil it in His own good time. So, then, Abram's faith growing firmer, brought about in him the inevitable and ne-

cessary results of self-denial, that made him renounce his own ideas, his foregone opinions, and his own righteousness—then of hope, of love, of obedience, and thus of patience also. These followed upon Abram's faith, as fruits of the spirit given him, working them all out in him, as fruits are by the sap of the tree. Well, then, and beautifully does St. Paul sum up the first part of his reasoning on Abram's faith, by saying, "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom also, we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience, experience, and experience, hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given us."[1]

V.

But, inasmuch as these acts of hope, of love, of obedience, and of patience were only the consequence of the first act of faith, which alone conferred righteousness upon Abram, and without which, they never could have been wrought,—it is evident that these works had, and could have no merit whatever of their own. What merit, indeed, could they possibly have, "since it is God," says S. Paul, "Who giveth us both to will and to do" them;[2] "so that our sufficiency is of God alone"?[3] These works in Abram, as in ourselves, could have had, and have no more merit in themselves than the fruit of a tree, which is a proof, not of its

[1] Rom. v. 1-5. [2] Phil. ii. 13. [3] 2 Cor. iii. 5.

own merit, but only of the goodness of the tree that bears it. As we could have no fruit without a tree or without sap in that tree, therefore, says our Saviour, "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit."[1] So also can we do no works acceptable to God, except they be wrought in us by His Spirit, given us as seal of our faith, "without which faith, it is impossible to please Him."

"We are thus given to understand," says S. Ambrose, "that faith is the one thing that first commends us to God. When we have faith, then let us give diligence to make our works perfect.[2] For good faith shines in the ornaments of good works."[3] "Our doctrine then is," adds Hooker,[4] "that a man doth receive that eternal life and high reward, not for his own works, but for his faith's sake, by which he worketh; whereas, in truth, our doctrine is no other than that which we have learned at the feet of Christ, namely, that God doth justify the believing man, yet not for the worthiness of his belief, but for His worthiness which is believed. God rewardeth abundantly every one which worketh, yet not for any meritorious dignity which is or can be in the work, but through His mere mercy, by Whose commandment he worketh." Truly, for he has neither yet denied himself, nor yet believed with humility, who thinks his best works can possibly have any other merit than that of being a tribute of gratitude, an offering of love, or acts of praise and thanksgivings for mercies received and enjoyed through faith.

[1] S. Matt. xii. 33. [2] 'De Cain et Abel,' lib. ii. c. 2.
[3] Ibid. De Fide, lib. ii. Prolog. [4] Serm. ii. 23.

VI.

We see then clearly, (1) how righteousness cometh by faith only, and (2) how inseparable faith is from works, which being the fruits of the Spirit, "make faith perfect." Truly, then, "faith without works is dead, being alone," if it do not bring forth the fruit of good works, through which only it shows itself to be living, and "working by love" in the heart. "Is it then enough," asks S. Chrysostom, "only to believe on the Son in order to have life? By no means. Yea, hearken to Christ himself saying, 'Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.' For even if we believe rightly in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, yet do not lead an upright life, it will not profit us unto salvation."[1] "But rather begin at once," says S. Cyril of Jerusalem,[2] "to do good works, continuing in the faith, lest, like the foolish virgins in need of oil for their lamps, thou be left outside. Rest not in the thought alone that thou holdest the lamp, but keep it burning; and let the light of thy good works shine before men." "For faith," says S. Ambrose,[3] "is a lamp, as it is written: Thy word is a lamp unto my feet." The word of God, then, is what we are to believe; that word is light, and faith is the lamp. Now a lamp cannot burn except it receive light from somewhere else." "True faith," says S. Paul, "is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God."[4]

So then, if on the one hand faith alone makes our works acceptable unto God, works, on the other hand,

[1] S. Chrys. Hom. xxxi. in Johan.
[2] Catech. xv.
[3] Comm. lib. viii.; S. Lucæ c. 11.
[4] Eph. ii. 8.

that originate in nothing but "self," in human nature alone in its natural, unconverted state, being the yield of the natural heart, are no better than the sour fruit of the crab-tree; and the so-called "good works" found on such a stock, and which alone make up the plea of "self-righteousness" in man, are no better than artificial fruits tied on to the tree. They look good, but only at a distance, but in themselves they are worthless matter and naught; because, not only are they "no fruit" in themselves, but there is also no union between them and the tree, no flow of life into them from within. In like manner then, as a tree is good ere it yield good fruit as plain proof of its goodness, and not in order to become good, so also was Abram accounted good or righteous before God, by his simple act of implicit faith in Him, ere he had time to do any other act whatever than to believe and to trust Him.

But inasmuch, also, as good fruit proves that the tree is good, and, as it were, justifies it in the eyes of the gardener, and saves it from being cut down and cast into the fire, good fruit being so necessary a result of the goodness of the tree, that albeit the tree must be good in itself ere it can yield good fruit, yet it is not good except it do yield it,—so also with true faith, "faith in the heart unto salvation," as distinguished from mere head belief, the faith of the devils, "who believe in God, and tremble."[1] It cannot possibly exist in the heart without causing it to yield the good fruits or good works of the Spirit, from which true faith, first only in point of time, is inseparable, since the Holy Spirit is given only to them

[1] S. Jam. ii. 19.

that believe, and after they have believed; and yet faith is one "of the fruits of the Spirit."

The two, then, go, as we have seen, together; a true, sincere, unreserved faith, and the Spirit or grace of God, "working effectually," and showing itself through good works, "in them that believe." The two cannot exist apart in the heart, because, while these fruits of the Spirit, these good works, are the visible and outward proof that the heart that yields them must already be justified by faith, and thus righteous, they so far make it perfect, and justify it, that is, openly show it to be righteous; and they also contribute to the good of that heart, in so far, but no further, as the heart cannot be good and bear them, and is, therefore, not good except it bear them. So, then, since faith in the heart not only justifies us before God, but causes His Spirit to come down and to teach man to do God's will and to please Him, thus walking in the way of salvation all the days of our life, until we be saved, that is, safe in the kingdom of God,—the holy Apostle expressly says, that they who thus believe, "believe to the saving of the soul."[1]

VII.

Could, then, mere belief, the mere assent of the understanding, yield such results? Never. These results are fruits of the Spirit of God in us, in intercourse with our spirit; they are spiritual, altogether of a different nature from the intellect which, as we have seen, belongs to the soul of the natural man, and is therefore natural, and alienated from the life of God. The intellect occupies in man, as reasonable

[1] Heb. x. 39.

being, the place of instinct in animals, as irrational creatures. No amount of instinct can make an animal into a man, despite the infidel absurdities of certain "philosophers" of the present day, who being, it seems, too clever to have common sense, not only gainsay the statement of Scripture, that God created man after His own image and similitude, but also ignore the first principles of true mental philosophy, and either deny to man his spirit as a divine feature in him, or make it "an expansion" of his intellect, and thus are not ashamed to tell us, that he is the distant offspring of either monkeys or fishes. So also, no amount of intellect will make a man spiritual, and work in him the fruits of the Spirit. Never. The unclean spirits cast out by our Saviour were assuredly not wanting in intellect, whereby they confessed He was the Son of God; yet neither their intellect, their belief, nor the confession they made of Him, saved them from being sent into the deep.

Belief only formed the first element of Abram's faith; it was the foundation, the groundwork thereof, on which he built his trust and his confidence; these begat love, and love, obedience, and obedience, patience. His intellect readily acknowledged that the voice he heard was neither human nor intellectual; but it tried to dissuade Abram from listening to it. Abram's faith, however, overcame these counter-efforts of his reason, so that "he did not stagger through unbelief" by hearkening to them, "but was strong in the faith, giving glory to God." Belief or persuasion, which is the intellectual part of faith, trust and confidence being spiritual, lay at the bottom of Abram's faith; yet, alone, it could neither justify nor save

Abram. Mere belief, the mere assent of the intellect, is of no use to save man, it only adds to his condemnation; for, if he believe in God, why then does he not love Him as his Father reconciled through Christ? The devils believe; yet while believing, they hate God and dread Him.

VIII.

What, then, kindles the feeling of love for God in the heart, "that believes to the saving of the soul," and why is that love inseparable from such a genuine faith?—Our love for God can only flow from the belief that we are reconciled to Him, through the sacrifice of propitiation offered to Him for us, by the Son of His love, and from the feeling and trust that we are thus "accepted in Him, the Beloved." Now, if we do not believe this testimony which God gives of his Son, not only "do we make God a liar," but we as effectually shut out ourselves from the feeling of love for Him, which of necessity follows, or rather accompanies true faith, as Abram would have done, had he neither hearkened to the voice of God, nor believed Him; and we thus continue utter strangers to the "Spirit of adoption that would be shed abroad in our hearts, and whereby we might cry Abba, Father." That same Spirit, then, does not bear witness with our spirit that we are children of God, because we do not believe in the reconciliation wrought and offered. For, "he that believeth on the Son," on His sacrifice and atonement for himself individually, "hath the witness in himself; but he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son." (1 John v. 10, 11.)

So then, "faith in the reconciliation made for us by Him, who alone is the propitiation for our sins," begets love and gratitude for such a benefit, and this love and gratitude rest not until they show themselves to be real and sincere, by outward tokens of their existence in the heart; in other words, they bring forth the works of a godly life, as fruits of faith, as tribute of praise, and as acts of thanksgiving, that show the life of the spirit within, and keep up the covenant of love made between God and the man that lives by faith in the reconciliation wrought for him by Christ. Without this, no agreement, no covenant can exist between God and man; but the moment the heart embraces, by faith, the sacrifice of Christ and the atonement made by Him, an active reconciliation begins, and with it, a covenant of mutual love and peace between the Father and the child now reconciled to Him. Truly are we all, as the holy Apostle says, "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."[1] That was Abram's faith; thus was he reconciled, and thus also did he at once enter into a covenant with God. For, "he saw my day and rejoiced," said the Son of God Himself.[2] Abram saw, by faith, the sacrifice of the Lamb without spot and without blemish offered for himself, and saw himself thus reconciled. And however more dim such a view may have been than the sight of it we have, we who look back upon the sacrifice as actually offered, and

[1] Gal. iii. 26.

[2] "Et credidit Abraham Deo. Quid credidit? Christum sibi per susceptionem corporis hæredem futurum. Ut scias quod hoc credidit, Dominus ait: Abraham diem meum vidit, et gavisus est. Ideo reputatum est illi ad justitiam, quia rationem non quæsivit, sed promptissimâ fide credidit." (S. Ambrose, de Patr. Abr. lib. i. c. 3.)

upon the satisfaction as actually wrought and accomplished, yet we see that we too are "blessed with the faithful Abraham," of the same blessing, through the same faith, in the same sacrifice, by means of the same propitiation and reconciliation. So that, while "the gospel was preached before unto Abraham,"[1] we of the gospel look forward to our meeting him above, and hope to sit with him at the marriage supper of the Lamb in heaven.

For there is only "one Body and one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all."[2]

Well then, and rightly does the holy Apostle Paul end his reasoning on Abraham's faith, by showing that the righteousness imputed to him was Christ's own, in these words: "Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but for us also to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification;"[3] raised again, in token that He was just, not only of His own righteousness, but also of the righteousness which is of the law; which He, Just, had won for us, unjust, by fulfilling for us, while in our flesh, the law of God we had broken. He then rose again. He, as it were, came out of prison, thus proclaiming to heaven and earth that He had done all; that our debt was paid, our sins atoned for, and our guilt forgiven.

IX.

Since then, we "receive the Spirit, not by the

[1] Gal. iii. 8. [2] Eph. iv. 4–6. [3] Rom. iv. 23.

works of the law, but by the hearing of faith."[1] Whence comes faith, without which we cannot receive the Spirit, without which, therefore, "it is impossible for us to please God," so that whatsoever is not of faith, is sin?"[2] "Faith," says the holy Apostle, "cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."[3]

Thus did it come to Abram. Abram heard God's voice and believed it. It was the word of God spoken to him; it is the word of God written for us. "The word is nigh thee," says God, "in thy mouth and in thy heart:" "That is," says S. Paul, "the word of faith, which we preach." "For this cause, also, thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."[4] "Could the Apostle speak plainer," says S. Ambrose;[5] "could he demonstrate more fully that faith in believers is a gift of God, than by saying that they received the word preached and taught them, not with doubt as if it were the word of man, but with faith as being the word of God?" Nothing, indeed, can be clearer, more simple, or more positive. It is the way little children receive what they hear; and our Saviour tells us, that except we "be converted and become as little children, we shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."[6]

Truly. For if our faith do not rest on the word of God, "as prime principle of faith,"[7] says Archbishop

[1] Gal. iii. 2. [2] Rom. xiv. 23. [3] Ibid. x. 8, 17. [4] 1 Thess. ii. 13.
[5] De Voc. Gent. lib. i. c. 8. [6] S. Matt. xviii. 3.
[7] Relations of a Conference, etc., pp. 27, 28, ed. 1673. I am, of course,

Laud,—a word as much revealed to us in the Bible as it was to Abraham at Ur,—whereon shall we stay it?

well aware of the objections to this, which either sneer, cavil, or ignorance will make; but it would lead me beyond the scope of this Outline to reply to them, inasmuch as I have already stated what my views are, in '*Philosophy or Truth*,' pp. 321–372, where I dwell on the fact lost sight of by most writers on the subject—that the message to us contained in Holy Scripture is not addressed to our intellect so much as to our moral and spiritual being; as a proof of which it is not dependent on any particular construction or mechanism of language. So that it is to be expected that it should contain many things at variance with our mere notions or with the development of mere intellect.

Here I will only answer such objections in the words of my betters; and, first, in those of S. Chrysostom, who says of "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," "It is, indeed, inspired; doubt it not;" and, secondly, in the words of Archbishop Laud, "Now all propositions of Canonical Scripture are alike firm, because they all alike proceed from Divine Revelation; but they are not alike fundamental in the Faith. For the belief of Scripture to be the word of God and infallible, is an equal, or rather a preceding prime principle of faith, with or to the whole body of the creed." (Abp. Laud, ibid.) "For the charter of foundation," says Dr. Waterland, "is undoubtedly an essential of the covenant; and therefore, of course, the admittance of the sacred oracles which are the charter itself (or at least, the only authentic instrument of conveyance) is essential to the covenants; consequently, to reject or disbelieve the Divine authority of Sacred Writ is to err fundamentally." ('Discourse of Fundamentals,' vol. viii. p. 97.)

I, therefore, and for my part, search the Scriptures, not in order to doubt, but in order to know and to love them,—persuaded, as I am, from long and varied experience, of the truth of what S. Ambrose says: "Major est ambitioso eloquentiæ mendacio simplex veritatis fides," that simple faith in the truth "rises high above the lies of ambitious eloquence." (De Abrah. Patr. lib. i. c. 2.) Ἐπεὶ καὶ ἡ τῆς ἁπλότητος πίστις βελτίων ἐστὶ τῆς ἐκ περιεργασίας πιθανολογίας. "For 'the faith of simplicity' (fiducia simplex), says S. Athanasius (Contra Arian. Orat. iv.), is better than the plausible talk of meddlesome inquiry." It is the only attitude that becomes a child; and is thus better than the pretensions and empty talk of those who, "desiring to be doctors of the law, understand neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm."

On the flights, more or less measured, of a limited intellect, that cannot soar unto Him Who is Spirit, and Who dwells far beyond the highest thoughts of man? If intellect can find Him, why has it never yet done so? why then did Socrates quail at the hour of death? and why did Plato, who went beyond his master, even unto the very borders of the world of spirits, there yearn for a Divine word on which to cross the ocean of life, and to reach in safety the heavenly land he fain would see, and the God he could not find out, but which he felt and knew did exist? Or shall we rest our faith on the day-dreams of doughty philosophers, who tell us to look for "subjective truth," as they call it, within ourselves—"wherein dwelleth no good thing"—and inside our heart, "which is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked;" or "in our mind, which we are told and feel "is enmity against God"? Poor blind men, who mistake the phosphorescence of a diseased retina for the light which is to guide them in life. It is but charity to warn them that there is a ditch, and a deep one too, ahead of them on their way.

So, then, since it is not in man, it must be "given him from heaven,"[1] as it was not in Abram until he heard the voice of God and gave faith to it. And that voice is revealed to us in His word, on which alone our faith can rest. Therefore, says S. Cyril, "Hold the faith in the doctrine and in the promise which the Church delivers to thee, and which is fraught with the whole Scripture."[2] "Wherefore, also," continues the same holy man, is "not even the least of the mysteries of the faith to be taught and delivered without the

[1] S. John iii. 27. [2] Catech. v.

[authority of the] Holy Scriptures; neither is it to be simply alleged by plausible language and ornaments of style. Believe not such a one speaking to thee, unless at the same time thou canst find proof of what he says out of Holy Scripture. For the safety of our faith depends not on the wisdom of words, but on proofs drawn from the Holy Scriptures."[1] "For faith in the Apostles and prophets," says S. Ambrose,[2] is a good foundation; it rises and is built on the two Testaments, to both of which equal faith is due; since our Lord Himself says: Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me. But if ye believed not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?"[3]

No wonder, then, if the Alexandrian philosopher, who only believed in Moses, and had no inkling of the power of faith to justify a man, should yet, in advance of many Christians, say: "Faith, which is trust in God, is the only good that disappoints not, but is solid; it is the comfort of life; the filling up of our best hopes; it wards off evils and secures blessings to us; it keeps evil spirits at a distance, and makes us know what piety means; it gives us happiness for our inheritance, and it enables us to make the best of everything,—stayed, as it is, on the Cause and Author of all things, Who is able to do all things, yet only wills what is good."[4] But to the Christian knight faith is yet more; it is the shield against which the shafts of despair or of doubt rebound; and thus "it overcometh the world," beyond which it is "the substance of

[1] Catech. iv. [2] Comm. in S. Luc. c. 13.
[3] S. John v. 46, 47. [4] Philo, De Abrah. p. 137.

things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." Further it cannot go.

In vain, then, will men worry themselves "to find out many inventions," and to make another way than the one made, which is—to believe God and to obey Him. In vain do they, for the sake of establishing their own righteousness, which the prophet tells them is, after all, "but filthy rags," instead of accepting that which is by faith, and alone real before God, do they labour to darken the counsel of this "word of faith," "by their own words without knowledge,"—it shines, it burns, and it will continue to shine and to burn, until heaven and earth have passed away, and it yet "abideth for ever." But, of course, sore eyes hate the light as craven hearts do the Truth. Nevertheless the Light and the Truth subsist; the one for the joy, the other for the comfort and peace of those that love them.

CHAPTER VI.

GOD'S FIRST COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM.

No sooner had Abram believed God, and hoped against hope, solely on God's word, than God made a covenant with him by sacrifice. Yet still only a covenant of faith, with him as the heir of the world, and not yet with him as father of a peculiar race. "For the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham: who is the father of us all."[1]

God then said to Abram, "I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it." And Abram said, "Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" Then the Lord commanded him to take an heifer, a goat and a ram, all three years old, a turtle dove and a young

[1] Rom. iv. 13, 17.

pigeon, to divide them in the midst, and to lay each piece against the other; but the birds he divided not. And he put no fire under, but waited until the sacrifice—like that of Gideon, of Elijah, and others—were accepted, and fire from heaven consumed it. And while thus waiting, Abram drove away the birds of prey that alighted on the carcases, and the like of which, to this day, may be seen at the same work, domesticated as they are in every Arab encampment.

"And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and lo! an horror of great darkness fell upon him, and God said unto him: Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in the land that is not theirs, and shall serve them four hundred years. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." "And when the sun went down the fire from heaven consumed the sacrifice, and the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying: Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates."

Such was God's answer to Abram's asking Him by what sign he should be certified that he would inherit the land. The victims appointed by God were divided, and the parts set against each other, to show the two parties in the covenant—God and Abram; and they were thus chosen, not according to Levitical rites, as if this statement were an afterthought or an invention of some later writer, as some men presume to say,—but these, the heifer, the goat, the ram, the turtle-dove, and the young pigeon, were thus specified by God, either, says A. Ezra, as being the animals from among which were chosen victims for sacrifices

under the law; or, as S. Ambrose thinks, the animals represented the Mosaic, and the birds the spiritual dispensations. Or, again, we may perhaps understand this offering of so many animals at once, connecting, as we cannot help doing, this first mention of a turtle-dove and a young pigeon with the last in S. Luke ii. 24; the heifer to represent Egypt, where it was sacred to Isis, and was an emblem of the land of Egypt, in which the Israelites were to be in bondage; the goat being used for sin-offerings under the law, to be meant for the whole time of the Jewish Commonwealth, properly so called; and the ram for their estate under the Seleucidæ, as part of the Macedonian empire, until the coming of Him at Whose presentation in the temple a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons were offered. Thus embracing at once the whole Theocracy, from the first covenant made with the father of the people of God, to the fulfilment of the promise made to him and to his posterity.

The "horror of great darkness" that fell upon Abram, ere his sacrifice was accepted, possibly meant the period of darkness and of suffering in bondage in Egypt, during which his children would even forget the name of the Lord among their heathen oppressors, a period of affliction God said should be four hundred years, and which, as we shall see hereafter, lasted no longer. Then God foretold the judgments He would bring upon the nation, Egypt, which afflicted Abram's children, while the Amorite inhabitants of Canaan brought their abominations and wickedness to such a pitch as to make their expulsion and the division of their land among the children of Israel an act of justice on the part of Him to whom the whole earth

belongs. Lastly,—God tells Abram that He had already given in His own will and foreknowledge the land of those Canaanitish tribes to his posterity; drawing the limits thereof from the River of Egypt,—that is, not the Nile, but the torrent of Egypt at El-Arish, the southernmost boundaries of Judah[1]—to the Euphrates; unto which extended the borders of the kingdom of Israel in its palmy days under Solomon. For we cannot for a moment admit that God should say to Abram, "Unto thy seed have I given this land from the river of Egypt," and not fulfil his promise, for, if by "the river of Egypt" is meant the "Nile," against the opinion of the best Jewish commentators, then God's promise to Abram is yet to come.

This first covenant of God with Abram then was still only of faith,—a covenant of generalities, of promises only, without as yet one tangible proof of the fulfilment of the promises made, since, while Abram was told that in him all nations should be blessed, he had and could have no son, and when, further, a son was promised, no time for his birth was yet determined; and with this, the very land in which he sojourned, and that should belong to his posterity, was not his own. So that, not only did God gradually reveal Himself and His counsels to Abram, as Abram con-

[1] Reland. Palæst. vol. i. p. 286; V. Raumer, Palæst. p. 47 and note: A. Ezra ad Gen. xv. 18; Abarbanel, Comm. in Pent. fol. 50; Samaritan Vers. in De Sacy, Mém. de Littérature, p. 149; Geo. Syncell. Chron. p. 86; Epiphan. Hæres. lib. ii. vol. ii. p. 703. The passages from Herodotus, Pomponius Mela, and others, which Heidman, Palæst. p. 4, brings forward, stating that Judæa extended "usque ad Ægyptum," prove nothing, inasmuch as Egypt always reached to the Red Sea; even owned the peninsula of Sinai under her earlier kings; and at all times extended beyond the easternmost branch of the Nile.

tinued to make his faith perfect by his consistent walk among the corrupt inhabitants of Canaan,—but, by comparison with the closer covenant that followed in the immediate promise and gift of a son, we might perhaps say that Abraham was being led "from faith to faith." While yet in this state, Ishmael was born to him of Hagar, of whom S. Paul tells us distinctly that "he that was born of the bondwoman was after the flesh,"[1] as, indeed, he must have been; for we can neither admit nor understand the birth of Ishmael, together with that of Isaac, unless both happened by the Divine will, and for a special purpose. This being the case, and taking all things into consideration,—the state of society in those days, "a state of ignorance at which God did wink," and the two dispensations or covenants of the law and bondage, and of the Jerusalem, which is from above, of the Jews and of freedom in Christ, that were to be figured by these two sons,[2] one of Abram with the bondwoman, the other of Abraham with the free woman,—we may overlook many details in the whole occurrence, which, under other circumstances, would appear to us inexplicable; as, for instance, the part Sarai acted in the matter; and her harsh treatment of Hagar, who had, in fact, only done what she was commanded to do.

But by God's will Hagar was to go into the wilderness, and there meet the Angel of the Lord, who was also to tell her the name her son should have, and warn her that "he would be a wild man—that his hand would be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and that he should dwell in the presence of his brethren"[3]—a prophecy which is ful-

[1] Gal. iv. 22, *seq.* [2] Gal. iv. 25, 26. [3] Gen. xvi. 12.

filled at this day. The sons of Ishmael are the wildest of the wild sons of the desert, untamed and untameable, like the wild asses of their wildernesses; conquered, in part, perhaps, but never subdued; dreaded by their neighbours, and at war with themselves; here, there, and everywhere, they yet "dwell in the presence of their brethren," whom, however, they neither acknowledge nor treat as such.

Incidentally, also, this birth of Ishmael proves, as we above, and against all gainsayers, that Abram left Haran, came to Canaan, went down to Egypt, and returned to dwell in Canaan within one year; that leaves no time for his stay at Aleppo, and for his reign at Damascus, on his way from Haran to Canaan. For Sarai gave him Hagar "after he had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan;"[1] and since he was eighty-six years old when Ishmael was born, a year later, he must have been seventy-five years old when he settled in Canaan after his return from Egypt. But "Abram was also seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran"[2]—that same year.

[1] Gen. xvi. 3; v. 16. [2] Gen. xii. 4.

CHAPTER VII.

GOD'S SECOND COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM.

THIRTEEN years after the birth of Ishmael, "when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared unto him and said unto him: I am the Almighty God; walk before me and be thou perfect"[1]—upright or sincere.

Closer and closer did God's intercourse grow with His chosen and faithful servant; and as the time was come when he should at last receive the promise in which he hoped against hope, and embrace the son who was to be at the same time both the pledge and the heir of that promise, God appeared again unto Abram, as the Almighty God. "Walk before Me, said he to Abram, "and be thou upright;" honest as My servant in the midst of the crooked generation around thee, and sincere in My service; "I am thine exceeding great reward;" thou canst have none greater.

"And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with

[1] Gen. xvii. 1.

him, and said, As for Me, behold, My covenant is with thee; neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee." No one but the Almighty could so speak to a man who as yet had no son. But He, with Whom "one day is as a thousand years and thousand years as one day," and Who saw at a glance the whole existence of His Church from her birth until her entrance into glory, said, as He alone might, "I have made thee a father of many nations." All things serve Me, since I have made them all; "I will work, and who shall let it?"

Therefore did God first alter Abram's name into Abraham, as father of many nations,[1] that is, "of us all"[2]—who are blessed with the faithful Abraham, "who also walk in the steps of that faith which he had yet being uncircumcised." It was not, therefore, until after God Almighty had thus, by His will and power, established Abraham as "father of all them that believe,"[3] that is, of His whole Church universal, that He gave them the seal of His covenant, restricted to the race that was for a period of time to be His Church in the earth,[4] set apart from all other nations,

[1] The nearest etymology for Abraham is *Ab-raham*, "father of a great multitude." It is not, strictly speaking, Hebrew, but Arabic; anyhow, it is Shemitic, and may be referred to the time when the several Shemitic dialects were not so distinct as they have been since. This etymology, however, is not quite satisfactory.

[2] Rom. iv. 16, 12. Gal. iii. 9. "This is not true," says S. Cyril of Jerusalem, "if we take it literally; for Abraham is not the father of us all, according to the flesh; ἀλλ' ὁ τύπος τῆς ἐκείνου πίστεως, πάντας ἡμᾶς υἱοὺς ποιεῖ τοῦ Ἀβραάμ, but the figure or type of his faith makes us all children of Abraham." (Catech. v.)

[3] Rom. iv. 11.

[4] Ὑμῖν οὖν μόνοις (Ἰουδαίοις) ἀναγκαία ἦν ἡ περιτομὴ αὐτὴ· ἵνα ὁ λαὸς οὐ

and governed by Himself; and it was not until then that Abraham received the sign of the circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised; that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also."[1]

Clearly, then, the Jewish Church, or people, was, in the counsel and design of God, a visible Church within an invisible one,—as time is described to be a circle within eternity; both Churches, the Jewish then visible and then present, and the future and at that time still invisible Church, having one life in common —righteousness which is by faith in Him, "Whose day Abraham saw, and rejoiced," and of Whom "ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands around the throne of God in heaven sing: Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and glory, and honour, and blessing."[2]

As Abram's name was changed by God to Abraham, so was Sarai's into Sarah, "the Princess," the wife of him who received the greatest honour a man ever did win, that of being called the intimate Friend of God;

λαὸς ἦ, καὶ τὸ ἔθνος οὐκ ἔθνος, says Justin Martyr (Dial. c. Tryph. p. 236, *seq.*), who points out in proof thereof that Abel, Enoch, Noah, Melchizedek, etc., were acceptable to God, though they were not circumcised; for that Abraham was the first to receive and to introduce circumcision. The fact that this rite was practised among the Egyptians and other nations has been brought forward to prove that the Israelites might have borrowed it from Egypt. But this, like other such statements, is set aside by facts. The Egyptian monument on which the rite of circumcision is represented is of the time of Ramses II.; more than four hundred years after Abraham's visit to the court of Pharaoh.

[1] V. 11. [2] Rev. v. 13.

greater than the greatest of kings; whose praises have rung wide in the earth from under the oaks of Mamre to the far East and to the yet farther West. And now the son and heir of the promise was given. "My covenant," said God, "will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year."[1] And Abraham laughed—laughed with joy at the news. He had believed; he had hoped against hope; he had looked for the promised child he knew neither how nor when; and at last the time was come. "Could it be possible?" said Abraham, with a smile of thanksgiving. Who would have thought that "a child should be born unto him that is an hundred years old"?

Yet "is there anything too hard for the Lord?" said the Lord Himself,—one of the three mysterious visitors who came to Abraham "in the plains of Mamre, as he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day." "At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son." And Sarah laughed, not with joy so much as from doubt; for when the Lord asked: "Wherefore did Sarah laugh?" she denied, saying: "I laughed not;" for she was afraid. And He said, "Nay, but thou didst laugh."

"And the men"—the men! Oh that our eyes could have beheld these leaders of the heavenly hosts, the Angel of the Presence, the Lord Himself, and His two companions,—may be Gabriel, Michael, or Raphael, marshals of His legions of angelic spirits,—come down to visit the earth! That we had seen them come to lodge with their servant, and to share with him his bread made upon the hearth and his butter and milk, while on

[1] Gen. xvii. 21. [2] V. 17.

their faithful errand of love and peace to Him, and ere they surveyed from the hills east of Mamre the doomed cities of the plain,—the Lord to give orders, and the archangels to obey them, and for Abraham's sake to save Lot and his family from the overthrow! That we had been in the tent, and seen those three—the sacred number—partaking of their humble fare, and heard their voice, and seen their familiar intercourse with their host! Angels they were, and he lodged them. Was it unawares? He must have known them and their errand ere they parted, for he addressed one as the Lord, and worshipped Him with the most profound reverence, while earnestly pleading for his kindred,—pleading until he was heard, and Lot was saved. Was it then that Abraham "saw the day of Christ, and rejoiced," and that the countenance and the address of his Heavenly Guest gave him an inkling of Him in Whom he already believed, and of what awaited him in His kingdom above, thus embracing at a glance "His whole family which in heaven and on earth is named," and of which he, Abraham, had been made the father, though as yet without an heir?

We shall know more of this one day, when—if we be worthy—we meet Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. What a meeting! We shall then hear Abraham himself relate how he heard God's call, and how he obeyed it; how he believed and trusted Him against all human thought and hope; and how he received his reward; and then we shall compare his faith with our own,—and blush. We shall hear him speak of this very interview, of his feelings when he beheld the Lord Himself, with His two companions, coming to him; how he welcomed them; how they

knew each other; how they bid him farewell until they should again meet in the realms of light, whence they had come, and whither they would soon return. We may then compare our hope of meeting Abraham and those same angels above, whither faith bids us look, with the only prospect which the utmost efforts of Socrates' intellect afforded him at the hour of death. "If what we hear be true," said the wise Athenian, grasping the cup of hemlock broth, "what boon will it be to me to meet Palamedes, Ajax, and Telamon in Hades, and there, to be with Rhadamanthus, for ever free from unrighteous judges!" His intellect could go no further, and "he had no hope."[1]

Not so Abraham; not so those who are to be blessed with him. If, at last, through faith and hope, we meet him above, then, haply, shall we bear in mind many a time at which the Lord also came to our door and knocked, but we did not open to Him, neither came He to sup with us, and to make His abode with us. And yet we are more favoured than was even Abraham; he saw the day of Christ by faith, we see it by sight; he hoped in His coming, but we look back upon it, and look forward to His second appearing in glory as to the fulfilment of His first coming in great humility. We have it told us plainer than even God's revelation to Abraham; we may read it, and we do read it; but what is our faith in it? Such as to be imputed unto us for righteousness? Such as to make us friends of God, and the hosts of angels? It seems as if the greater the knowledge and the brighter the light, the weaker was the faith; but, also, the lower the righteousness, and the poorer the blessing.

[1] Eph. ii. 12.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BIRTH OF ISAAC.

"AND the Lord visited Sarah as He had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as He had spoken; for Sarah conceived and bare Abraham a son in his old age at the set time of which God had spoken to him. And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare him, Isaac."[1]

Here, then, was the promise granted. Abraham had believed against hope that he should be the father of many nations,—conceive, then, his inward satisfaction, "the answer of his good conscience," that said: Was I not right in believing Him and counting Him faithful that promised? I trusted Him and found Him my shield; I obeyed Him, and He has been to me my exceeding great reward; I could have no son; but here he is—promised, and then given.

"And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac, being

[1] Gen. xxi. 1, 2.

eight days old, as God had commanded him."[1] He was not—he could not be—slack in thus sealing his son with the seal of God's visible covenant with him, as one of a race set apart in God's counsel and by His will to be for the time being His Church in the world; an earnest of what should follow, a figure of what awaits His people when gathered unto Him in His kingdom above.

Faith in God's promise, then, and the consequent righteousness which is by faith, preceded in Abraham the gift of the circumcision, as outward and visible sign or "seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised."[2] Had Abraham not been called, had he not believed God and had he not thus been reckoned righteous for so doing—that is, justified by faith while he made his faith perfect by his works—he never would have received some time later the seal of that righteousness in the outward token or sign of God's covenant with him, and through him, with his race, as reward, or by virtue of that righteousness which was by faith. Never. Abraham was already in covenant with God, in a covenant of righteousness imputed to him for his faith and works, when he received the circumcision, not in order to make him righteous, but as a proof that he was so already; not as a gift of righteousness, but as a seal thereof.

As such, then, circumcision as outward and visible sign of God's covenant with Abraham was only a visible ratification of the covenant of faith and obedience previously made with him; and it therefore implied that former covenant of faith. It implied that, as it was only the sign of Abraham's righteous-

[1] V. 4. [2] Rom. iv. 11.

ness by faith and a seal thereto, it would alone as a sign, be worthless without the covenant to which it was affixed as seal; and that, therefore, circumcision as a sign of God's visible covenant with Abraham would be of no avail to his children unless they like him received it also as a seal of their righteousness which is by faith. This righteousness by faith, of which circumcision was only the seal, made the great difference between those who, "though of Israel were not all Israel," and of whom it is said that neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children: but in Isaac shall thy seed be called."[1] "For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."[2]

Abraham, who first received the sign of circumcision as seal of his righteousness, received it late in life, because he was called, and he believed and obeyed, late in life also; and he must have thus qualified himself by faith and obedience ere he could be received into covenant with God, and be sealed by Him. But inasmuch as the promise was made to him and to his children after him, and the covenant was specially renewed with Isaac in proof thereof,[3] all Abraham's children had a right to that promise by virtue of their birth which took place within the covenant and not without it, in token of which they were sealed on the eighth day with the seal of the covenant that gave them a claim to the promise to which they had a previous right as children of

[1] Rom. ix. 6, 7. [2] Rom. ii. 28. [3] Gen. xvii. 21.

Abraham. That seal of circumcision implied, as a matter of course, the righteousness by faith on account of which Abraham had received, and by which he had inherited the promise. Yet since circumcision did not give that righteousness by faith in the promise, but only gave a share and benefit in that promise, that could be enjoyed and hoped for solely through faith in it,—it is evident that circumcision alone did not profit, except as the outward badge of a certain commonwealth which, being governed by a Spiritual King, was outward in form only, but living through faith in His spiritual promises without which no subject of that commonwealth could really be a living member thereof.

Well, then, did the Baptist say to some of these same children of Abraham: "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise children unto Abraham."[1] What children?—"Know ye not," says S. Paul, "that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham?"[2] Therefore did the Baptist preach "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins"[3] as preamble to the Gospel of Grace; a "baptism," says Justin Martyr,[4] that was above the law, since it offered forgiveness through repentance and faith in Christ to such as were condemned by the law." For "the law being weak through the flesh,"[5] the flesh could not fulfil it, and therefore the law made circumcision of no avail to save man; since "if thou break the law," says S. Paul, "thy circumcision is made uncircumcision."[6]

[1] S. Matt. iii. 9. [2] Gal. iii. 7. [3] S. Mark i. 4.
[4] Quæst. xxxvii. [5] Rom. viii. 3. [6] Rom. ii. 25.

Clearly, then, since "faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness" while he was yet uncircumcised, righteousness which is by faith was the only clause really binding in God's covenant with him, of which covenant circumcision was only the warrant or seal. "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love . . . and a new creature,"[1]—"the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him: where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all, and in all."[2] "As many, then, as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."[3]

We see, therefore, that circumcision was merely the outward sign of Abraham's covenant with God that rested on his righteousness which is by faith; it was the badge or mark of God's visible Church, both before and after the law; while the inward and spiritual life of that Church lay in the righteousness which is by faith in the promise of a Saviour, made to Abraham and to his posterity.

So, also, as regards baptism in the Church of Christ. It is "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace" whereby under the Gospel we are made members of the visible Church of Christ, of that part of the Father's family "which in earth is named."[4] Baptism, then, does not save us,—that is, it does not secure heaven for us so that, happen what will, we may not come short of our inheritance. No; no more than circumcision alone secured for the Jew a

[1] Gal. v. 6; vii. 15. [2] Col. iii. 10. [3] Gal. iii. 16. [4] Eph. ii. 15.

place in Abraham's bosom; but, like the Jewish rite, baptism places us in a state of grace and of covenant with the Head of the Church, by bringing within our reach certain promises of an eternal inheritance, to which it also gives us the birthright of a new birth unto righteousness. Baptism, then, puts us in a state of salvation—in a state in which if we continue unto the end by a living faith in the promises made at our baptism, we shall be saved at the last; that is, we shall arrive safe at home in Our Father's House. "It procures for us," says S. Cyril, "both remission of sins and the adoption of sons;"[1] and we may add also a claim to our being forgiven when we repent, as children of the family on earth, united by the One Spirit to the rest of that same family in heaven.

Yet how many things may happen on our journey thither to make us come short of our heavenly home, so that we never join the throng of spirits of just men made perfect around the Throne of God! "The gifts and calling of God are, indeed, without repentance" on His part; for we cannot imagine that He would even call us to His kingdom if He did not mean us to inherit it. But how often do we turn back and think scorn of that good land?—For with us rests—either to make our calling and our election sure, by a firm and consistent walk with God, in the Spirit of adoption shed on us by Jesus Christ as a seal of our faith in Him, or else to fall or "fail from the grace of God"[2] given us, and thus not only to make that calling and election vain, but also to add the

[1] Ὡς ἀφέσεως ἁμαρτημάτων, καὶ υἱοθεσίας προξενητικὸν τὸ βάπτισμα. (Catech. Mystag. ii.)

[2] Heb. xii. 15.

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weight of both to our sentence of condemnation; thus making our end worse than our beginning.

To the grace received through baptism does S. Ambrose[1] apply these awful words of the Apostle, "that it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance;" explaining it to mean that one may not be baptized a second time "unto repentance and remission of sins," but that through deep and earnest repentance the child may again sue for the pardon of which his adoption still leaves him a hope. But, also, we may never repent; we may go on being hardened in sin, feeding the swine without a thought of home; thus not only grieving the Holy Spirit "whereby we were sealed unto the day of redemption,"[2] but also "quenching it;"[3] and then be left in a deeper gloom than ever, without faith, hope, or light homewards. "For it had been better for us not to have known the way of righteousness than, after we have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto us."[4]—Thus may we through our own fault, deprive ourselves of the Spirit given us as an earnest of our inheritance: thus, as it were, tearing up with our own hands our title or charter to that inheritance, and throwing away the pledge and token thereof given us of God.

For, as with circumcision, so also with baptism; it is a visible token or pledge to us of gifts spiritual and eternal; gifts, however, that are not received passively

[1] Ad Hebr. xi. [2] Eph. iv. 30. [3] 1 Thess. v. 19. [4] 2 Pet. ii. 21.

like a shower by the ground, but gifts that must be received actively, won and held fast unto the end by sincere faith in the promises to which baptism gives us right.[1] Like circumcision, therefore, it also rests on righteousness which is by faith in those promises, and of which righteousness—actual, as in the faithful Christian, or imputed as in the case of infants—it is the seal. Without this righteousness which is by faith, baptism alone is of no more use in itself than a seal without the deed to which it was affixed.[2] For evidently, this our lively faith, which in any case is wrought by God's grace preventing us, is merely our taking an active part in the covenant God makes with us.

A heathen is, like Abraham, called supernaturally, and like Abraham also, must he believe ere he can receive baptism as the seal of his faith. But his children cannot be called in the same way as he himself was called. His child has, like Isaac, his father's faith imputed to him; in other words, he, like Isaac, is born *in* the covenant of God's family; and this constitutes his call to God's promises and his election to His kingdom, as it did in the case of Isaac; and in token of this, he

[1] "As thou art about to go down into the water," says (on S. John iii. 5) S. Cyril to a catechumen, "give not thy mind to the simple water, but receive salvation through the efficacy of the Holy Ghost; for without both one and the other thou canst not be perfected. It is not I that say it, but Jesus Christ. Neither does he who being baptized of water, but not endowed with the Spirit, receive the full grace; nor yet he who being of good conduct, but not baptized, enter into the kingdom of heaven. It is a bold saying, but it is not mine. Jesus Christ said it." (S. Cyril, Catech. iii.)

[2] "If thy body be there," says S. Cyril to a catechumen, speaking of baptism, "and thy thoughts be elsewhere, it profits thee nothing." (S. Cyril, Catech. Præfat.)

is baptized, as Isaac was circumcised, in pledge, on God's part, that He extends to him the same privileges which He conferred on his father for his faith's sake. The child, however, becomes *of* that covenant by taking an active part in it, only when he begins to fulfil his part therein; and this he can only do by faith in the promises in Christ God makes him at his baptism, working in him by love, both for the Father Who gave the Son, and for the Son Who reconciled him to the Father—a love wrought in him by the Spirit of adoption, that makes him cry, "Abba, Father."

Yet, inasmuch as a covenant is virtually at an end when one of the two parties breaks the conditions thereof, either by neglect, by indifference, or by actual rejection; if a child that was baptized be never made aware of the family ties or covenant God made with him at his baptism, and does not believe in it, but lives and dies in utter disregard of the privileges it would have conferred upon him had he kept it, that man dies a worse death than if he had never entered into a covenant with God. For he never fulfilled his part, and he never believed in God's promises; since, had he done so, he would have received the Spirit of adoption instead of forfeiting it, and he would have thus prepared himself for the heavenly inheritance, in hope of which he might have lived. Practically, then, he who lives careless of his baptism, by turning to the world and following it, is in a worse condition than when in his actual state of "child of wrath" before his baptism, since he now wilfully yields to the sinful lusts of his soul and body, despite the offer of a spiritual and eternal life in God, to which his baptism gave him access.

Clearly, then, without a lively faith on our part in God's promises, they are to us a dead-letter; nay, by thus frustrating the end of our baptism, we as good as despise our birthright, and think scorn of our adoption as sons and heirs to our Father's kingdom, since we not only doubt His word of love, but give Him the lie direct to His face. We thus "do despite to the Spirit of grace," we turn our back upon our home, and set out to wander we may not know whither; but it is to certain death. Blessed, therefore, thrice blessed is the child who is so brought up under the genial influence of the Holy Ghost, as to grow up in the firm faith and full enjoyment of his heavenly Father's promises in Christ and in love for his Saviour; and who thus needs no "conversion," because he always was "converted;" he always believed in his Saviour's merits and atonement, always loved and always obeyed Him. But how few such there are! Yea, rather, we see that to the bulk of baptized Christians the words spoken by the Apostle to the Israelites, "brethren" and children of the prophets and of the covenant, apply: "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and he shall send Jesus Christ. . . . Whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things."[1] Whence we see that whether in baptism or out of it, our taking an active part in our covenant with God—in short, our fulfilling the conditions on which God will give us His kingdom—rests on our first being justified by faith in the atonement made for us by Christ, to which baptism is our birthright. But, alas! we may despise and lose it.

[1] Acts iii. 19.

Neither the call out of Egypt, nor the wonders wrought there, nor yet the baptism in the Red Sea,—no, not even the law on Mount Sinai, nor the bread from heaven gathered every morning around the camp,—could save the Israelites from being made to turn their back on the borders of Canaan, and to die in the wilderness, because of their murmurings and of their unbelief. They were circumcised, chosen, called, baptized, fed, followed, taught, warded, and blessed; but all this did not avail; they thought scorn of that pleasant land, and they never saw it. And, as with their brethren in that land, of whom only seven thousand had not bowed the knee unto Baal, although they were all circumcised, and all children of Israel, so with us also; the baptism that doth also now save us, is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh—original sin—"but the answer of a good conscience."[1] And what else is this than the inward consciousness of the righteousness that is of faith, working by love?

Lastly, as Abraham, who in one sense was the beginning of God's Church in the earth, received the seal of circumcision only late in life, and after he had entered into covenant with God through faith in Him, so did the beginnings of the Church of Christ also receive the seal of baptism late in life. When our Saviour sent His Apostles "to teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,"[2] He sent them first to teach men who, like Abraham, were born and had grown up in ignorance or in idolatry. They, therefore, had to make proof of their righteousness by faith in God's promises in Christ, ere they could be baptized. But as with

[1] 1 Pet. iv. 21. [2] S. Matt. xxviii. 19.

Abraham, so, also, with those Christians; the promise which they received through faith was "made to them and to their children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call;"[1] by virtue of which "the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were their children unclean, but now are they holy,"[2] that is, they are set apart, consecrated, in like manner as Isaac was set apart and consecrated, to God, as born in the covenant, being Abraham's son, and thus entitled to circumcision. Therefore, also, are the children of Christians baptized, because they are holy,—not saints in heaven—but set apart, consecrated to God as children of Christian parents; Christians, even only as the Israelite worshippers of Baal were Israelites; members of the visible Church, and thus professing the name of Christ, and, as such, having right to certain privileges which it rests with them either to cherish, to hold, or also to forfeit.

Those, then, who call themselves Christians, and who, nevertheless, refuse to baptize their children, act as Abraham would have done, if he, after having received the sign of circumcision as seal of the righteousness he had by faith, had refused to circumcise Isaac, with whom, as being Abraham's son, the covenant was also made; and as if he had waited until Isaac had, like him, been called out of Ur of the Chaldees, had crossed the Euphrates, and had defeated Chedorlaomer and his confederates. The thing was simply impossible. Isaac was the child of the promise, and was embraced in the covenant, together with the rest of his kindred that was to be; and, as such, he received the seal of that

[1] Acts ii. 39. [2] 1 Cor. vii. 14.

covenant, in order that, when once in it, he might, if he would, enjoy the blessings it conferred, both temporal and spiritual. In short, Isaac, as the first child, born in the covenant, was circumcised in order to share in the privileges of that covenant.

So are the children of Christian parents baptized, made members of the visible Church of Christ, in order that they may share, if they will, in the privileges granted to that Church; they are joined on to it in order to receive the life that flows from the Head, Christ, into His Body, the Church; they are grafted into the stock of the Tree, that they may draw the sap from it, and bring forth fruit. But even as members of the Body, they may die, if they do not derive life from it; and as branches they may also wither in the graft, if they do not draw the sap from the stem in which they are set.

Nevertheless, what should we think of a man who said he would wait until a member had life, and moved, ere he joined it on to the body; or of a gardener who insisted on gathering fruits on a branch ere he thought of grafting it? This is, however, what those do, who deny to their children the Sacrament of Baptism. They shut them out from the Body of Christ, as effectually as a Jew would have been excluded—literally "cut off"—from the commonwealth of Israel and from God's covenant by not being circumcised; and they thus doom their offspring to the doubtful and inferior admission of proselytes, by hindering them from their lawful adoption as children of the Kingdom, which is the first step towards receiving the Spirit of adoption, whereby they are taught to cry, "Abba, Father."

CHAPTER IX.

HAGAR IS SENT AWAY.

"And Isaac grew and was weaned, and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned."

A day of rejoicing, no doubt, among the chieftains of Gerar, when the son and heir of the Prince sojourning among them was weaned, and they came to greet Abraham, whose goodwill and friendship Abimelech, their king, sought and courted. They came attired in their best, their horses, camels, or even their asses, decked in the gayest trappings the wilderness of Shur could afford; and the muster of those wild, swarthy sons of the south must have been great and gay, and, we may be sure, most picturesque. Sarah, the Princess, proud of her son, would not cease to show him to the warriors that flocked to Abraham's tent; fierce, yet gentle; wild-looking, independent and proud, yet courteous as men are only in the East; eager, chatting, grave and gay, they all came to do honour to their wealthy and powerful guest. "God is with thee in all that thou doest," said Abimelech to Abraham; "now, therefore, swear unto me that thou wilt not deal

falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my son's son; but, according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned." And Abraham said: "I will swear."[1] Let us be friends; as things are, we cannot do without each other as long as we abide together in the same country.

On these terms of reciprocity did Abraham receive his guests; "they ate and drank and rose up to play," as at this day, and the air rang with their wild songs of the south, in the dialect of Ashdod; not all, we may be sure, to the praise of El-elion, the Most High God, but rather to that of Dagon, Ashtaroth, and Baal; with loud choruses to Sutech, the patron god of the children of Heth. Abraham, as servant of the true God, could have nothing in common with his heathen hosts, among whom he lived; yet he made them his guests with Eastern princely hospitality, thereby showing them that urbanity of manners and neighbourly feeling need not always depend on oneness of faith.

Still there was one bitter drop in the cup of happiness, full to the brim in Abraham's camp. There was Ishmael, already fifteen years old, just entering upon the early, wild, and reckless youth of the desert; not very much attached either to Sarah or to her son, whatever feelings he might entertain towards Abraham. Neither did Hagar's flight from before her mistress into the wilderness, where she received from the angel of the Lord the promise of a blessing on her own son, tend to increase the domestic happiness of Abraham's household; till, at last, Sarah said unto Abraham, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son." But it

[1] Gen. xxi. 23.

grieved Abraham because of Ishmael. Yet God told him to hearken to Sarah; and that for his sake He would bless Ishmael also. So "Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beershebah."[1]

Hard lines would this have been for both mother and child, to be thus sent away alone and with scanty provisions, to wander helpless and forlorn in such a wilderness as that of Beershebah, had it been done from human motives alone. But God had His own purposes in view; and as He had sent His Angel once before to meet Hagar in the wilderness, and even to give her son the name of Ishmael, He would meet her there again, and ratify to her son the promised blessing; there, in the desert his home. When, therefore, the water in the water-skin failed, and Hagar withdrew from her child that she might not see him die for thirst, God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water which He had prepared for her and for him. And from that day God was with Ishmael for Abraham's sake; and the lad grew and dwelt in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother, the bondwoman, took him a wife out of her own land, the land of bondage, Egypt.

[1] Gen. xxi. 14.

CHAPTER X.

THE SACRIFICE OF ISAAC.

Hitherto Abraham's faith had been repeatedly tried, and had always proved superior to the trial; it had overcome what for him was the world and the flesh; but it was yet to triumph over both. He had not staggered through unbelief at the promise of a son when he thought it impossible he should have one; and the son was given him against all hope. Great were the rejoicings that took place at his birth, and greater yet was the happiness Abraham enjoyed in the daily contemplation of God's promise fulfilled in that son, and in the prospect of leaving his wealth to him his lawful heir, instead of dividing it among his household servants.

Abraham was thus peaceably walking down the vale of years in the evening of his life—a life chequered with the darkest trials, and the most brilliant beams of faith and hope that glinted on his path and made it plain through deserts, and over hill and dale—

when the setting sun of his days was suddenly overcast, and all hope seemed once more at an end.

"God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am."[1] Always ready when God called, whether at Ur, at Mamre, or in Gerar,—whenever the Lord appeared and spake unto him, he, the Lord's faithful servant, was ready. He asked no questions beforehand; he could not doubt One so good, nor mistrust One so true; when called it was with him, "Behold, here I am," whatever the command be.

"And God said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of."

This was, indeed, a trial, as every temptation is; whether we be tempted by the devil and of our own lust to sin, or by God tried in our faith and hope. For "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man; but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed."[2] "Satan," says S. Ambrose very beautifully, "tempts in order to destroy us, but God tries us in order to crown us. God also tries those whom He has proved. Wherefore David says: 'Prove me, O God, and try me.' Thus did He prove Abraham ere He tried him, lest if He had tried him before He had proved him the trial might have been too heavy for him. God had proved him in various ways, and had found his faith equal to this its greatest effort. Wherein we notice that whereas God proves us by

[1] Gen. xxii. 1. [2] S. Jam. i. 13.

means of real circumstances in life, He tries us by feigned ones. For in this case, He never intended that the son should be slain by the father, neither did He who was preparing a lamb for the sacrifice, mean that Isaac should actually be offered; but God wished to try Abraham's affection, and see whether he loved his son more than obedience to His order."[1]

But since "before glory cometh humility," and since even the Captain of our Salvation Himself did not go up to His glory, but through much suffering,—was Abraham also tried to the uttermost. Yet as "God is faithful, Who will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will with the temptation also make a way of escape that we may be able to bear it,"[2] He prepared a way of escape for Abraham out of this great tribulation, because Abraham said when called, "Behold, here I am," and obeyed.

That was obedience indeed—obedience that consists in faith, trust, love, and self-denial. An obedient child obeys his father (1) because he believes that the man who orders him is his father, (2) because he trusts him as such, and (3) because he loves him. And in this does obedience differ from mere subjection, which implies neither faith, trust, nor love, but only submission from dread, fear, or whatever other motive; and no self-denial, but only constraint. Whereas it is impossible for a child to obey without denying himself, and setting his own will and tastes aside for the sake of doing his father's will and pleasure,—not because he is afraid of him, but because he fears and loves him.

This did Abraham, who must have marvelled at

[1] De Abr. Patr. lib. i. c. 8. [2] 1 Cor. x. 13.

the command given. To see his fondest hopes thus cheated in a moment, to have the innermost feelings of his human nature harrowed in so strange a manner, was enough, assuredly, to make Abraham stagger, if not through unbelief, at least from grief and astonishment. But no. It was God who gave the order; He who had promised and given that son against all hope, would Himself provide an issue out of the trial. How? Abraham did not know; he left it in the hands of Him Who knew it, and Who could and would do it. "What I do thou knowest not now," said the Saviour to Peter; "but thou shalt know hereafter."[1] Abraham's part was to obey, and he did obey; he denied himself wholly; he so far stifled his own feelings as not even to mention the matter to Sarah, says S. Ephraem; "but he rose up early in the morning and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt-offering, and rose up and went unto the place of which God had told him."

No more delay in this on the part of Abraham, than on his march from Haran the Sichem; none. In either case he obeyed; under different circumstances, indeed, but both in the one and in the other he trusted and loved Him who gave the command; and he denied himself.

"Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off; and he said unto his young

[1] S. John xiii. "That is faith," says S. Athanasius, "which relies on the possibility of what is impossible; on the strength of that which is weak; on the feeling of what is insensible; on the endurance of that which is to perish; and on the immortality of that which is to die." (De Salut. Adv. J. Chr. vol. i. p. 642.)

men, Abide ye here with the ass, and I and the lad will go yonder and worship and come again to you."

On the third day—why not on the first? S. Ephraem says, "Lest the act should have had the appearance of haste." But surely there was another reason. No other mountain in that mountainous country but the one God showed Abraham would have been a suitable site for such a sacrifice. The victim, the wood, the altar, and the site, too, were all figures of the sacrifice of Him in Whom Abraham believed and which he saw typified under his own hand. Where the land of Moriah was is not known; for it is rendered "the land of vision" by several versions, and the "land of the Amorites" by others. But as the distance of two days and part of one day's march from the neighbourhood of Beershebah suits well the generally received opinion that "the land of Moriah" was either very near "Mount Moriah," on which the Temple was built, or was that mount itself, we may keep to it. We know that there were Jebusites in the land, and, upwards of four centuries later, mention is made in Joshua and in the Judges[1] of "Jebus or Jebusi, which is Jerusalem;" but either it was not built in the days of Abraham, or he may have been directed to one of the neighbouring hills still "in the land of Moriah" by comparison with the other parts of the country; and thus near enough to the spot on which Isaac's antitype was offered in sacrifice, to form part of the type.

At all events, it could never have been Mount Gerizim, as do pretend certain writers, who are ever looking for something wherewith to gainsay or to

[1] Josh. xviii. 28; Judg. xix. 10.

lower the burden of Scripture,—for one very good reason, if for no other—that the distance from Beer-shebah to Mount Gerizim could not possibly be covered in two days and a half's march by Abraham on his ass, with the lad Isaac and the two young men on foot. And as to Mount Gerizim being "the altar" of Canaan in those days, it is a fond conceit of some one who never saw the country. First, we know nothing certain about this supposed pre-eminence of Mount Gerizim, which is a Samaritan invention, and dates only from after the Captivity; and, secondly, Mount Tabor, which is far higher and more conspicuous from the whole country round, has, from that fact, greater claims to being "the altar" of the land; and on it accordingly S. Athanasius says Melchizedek did reside, and supposes Abraham's interview with him to have also taken place on that mountain.[1]

But notice Abraham's very remarkable words to his servants: "I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you." Evidently, and as S. Paul says, he must have "accounted that God was able to raise up his son even from the dead, from whence also he received him in a figure."[2] Never otherwise could he have said that he and Isaac should come back. So strong, then, was his faith, so "firm was he in it," as the Holy Apostle says, that he never for one moment doubted that when Isaac was slain God would raise him up, as He must needs do, in order to fulfil His promise that "in Isaac should his seed be called."

We doubting, double-minded, careless, indifferent Christians may well stand aghast at the sight of Abra-

[1] See note p. 61, and S. Athanas. Opp. vol. ii. pp. 7–10.

[2] Heb. xi. 19.

ham's faith in God's promise which neither time, distance, age, nor even death itself, could shake, since it triumphed even over death.

For Abraham also, like S. Paul, was "persuaded," —it was not with him a matter of doubt, he did not seek within himself for excuses to weaken his faith in behalf of his reason,—but Abraham was "persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, should be able to separate him from the love of God, which," he also said, "is in Jesus Christ Our Lord."[1] Come what will, it abides like Him, eternal.

"And Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son, and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and they went both of them together." Then Isaac very naturally asked, "Where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?" And his father answered: "My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt-offering." Abraham looked from his son, carrying the wood on which he was to be laid, "to Him who went forth bearing His cross," to the Lamb without blemish and without spot: "Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for us, who by Him do believe," as Abraham did, "in God, that raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory; that our faith and hope might be in God."[2] For Abraham's faith and hope also were, in Him, and through Him, "Who was once to appear in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."[3]

"And they came to the place which God had told

[1] Rom. viii. 38. [2] 1 Pet. i. 19. [3] Heb. ix. 26.

him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood."

The Son, too, was stretched upon the wood of the Cross; "like a lamb before his shearer, is dumb, so opened He not His mouth," no, not even when fastened to the Tree. It was His Father's will which He was come to do, not His own. For He thrice prayed in great agony that if possible the bitter cup of death might pass from Him; "nevertheless," said He, "not My will, but Thine be done." And when on the Cross, "He cried with a loud voice, and said: Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit;" and having said thus, He bowed His head and died. "He died"—for our sins once, "but rose again for our justification;" and "now dieth no more;" no, no more—but is alive for ever and ever, and at the right-hand of the Mercy Seat, as our High Priest and Advocate with the Father. And when the fulness of time is come, then will He appear as our King, the King of kings, Who shall reign for ever—and with Him, on His throne, those, also, whom "He hath made kings and priests unto God, His Father,"—and their Father.

But Abraham was not allowed to slay his son. He had made the sacrifice. He had not withheld the son he loved from God, Whom he loved still more: and the sacrifice was accepted, as it always is when thus offered. The sacrifice was made. Isaac was no longer Abraham's own, for Abraham had given proof that he gave him up to Him Who had first given him; God, therefore, accepted the sacrifice at Abraham's hands, and He now showed the mercy and pity in which He delights. As Abraham raised his hand to slay his son,

the angel of the Lord stayed him from hurting the lad, and from heaven said—words that rang in Abraham's innermost heart, as he knew them to be true, "Now I know that thou fearest God."—Then, as later, as at present, to "Fear God and to keep His commandments, was, and is, the whole duty of man."[1]

And the lamb was provided. The sacrifice must be offered, the type completed, the covenant with Abraham once more renewed—but this time with an oath—that he should be blessed indeed, "because," said God, "thou hast obeyed My voice." And Abraham looked and saw a ram caught in a thicket—which, S. Ephraem says, is the wood of the Cross,[2] but S. Augustine, the crown of thorns;[3] and he went and took the ram, and offered him up instead of his son." "Behold," says S. Chrysostom, "the compassion and mercy of God. For, not only was the sacrifice offered and accepted, but Abraham gave proof of his love for God and won his crown by his deliberate choice to obey Him; and he thus also received back Isaac at His hands, and came away rejoicing with blessings a thousandfold."[4]

"Then Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beershebah, and Abraham dwelt at Beershebah."

Thus ended the greatest trial of human feelings and the fullest triumph of faith over them; the most absolute, painful order, and the most devoted obedience to it; the most unreserved sacrifice, and, for it, the greatest blessing; the greatest grief—only for a time, and after it the greatest joy—for ever; the most perfect image of the sacrifice of Christ, around which the

[1] Eccl. xii. 13.
[2] S. Ephr. vol. i. p. 173.
[3] De Civit. Dei, lib. xvi. c. 32.
[4] In Genes. Homil. xlvii.

Church of old gathered, as angels and shepherds did around His cradle; the one bright star in that dim twilight to which turned the eyes of the Israelites, whose inward covenant with God was, like that of Abraham, of righteousness by faith.

Abraham then returned to Sarah. If he hid from her the object of his departure, he, no doubt, told her the result of it, when he brought back Isaac, whom he had, as it were, recovered from the dead. He told her of his journey with Isaac, and how his heart was wrung when Isaac asked where the lamb was for the burnt-offering; how he replied with convulsed feelings that "the Lord would provide;" and how right he was to think so, for the Lord did provide. He told her of the inward satisfaction he felt; of the answer of his good conscience at having believed, trusted, and obeyed, and the end thereof, a renewed covenant with God, and fresh and yet more abundant blessings for evermore. He told her how faithful and merciful God had been to him, and how he would not have forfeited the happiness he then felt for all the world besides; no, not by having withheld his own son from God, at Whose hands he had first received him against all human hope.

And as with Abraham, so with us also. As he pleased God only by faith and obedience, and for this was called "the friend of God," so also can we please Him in no other way whatever than by implicit faith in His word, and by our obedience to it. But this requires self-denial. Therefore is it that so "many say, Lord, Lord," for this costs them nothing; and so few "do the will of their Father which is in heaven," that costs them their own.

CHAPTER XI.

THE DEATH OF SARAH.

Not many years after, Sarah died, a hundred and twenty-seven years old, in Kirjath-Arbah, which is Hebron.

Whether Abraham continued attached to the plains of Mamre, in which he had come to settle on his first visit, or had there perhaps old acquaintances, or even friends, turned by him to the knowledge of God, Sarah, it appears, returned to die there, and Abraham, maybe in the neighbourhood of Beersheba at the time, came to Hebron to mourn for her.

Then followed a scene we may witness at this day among the Hittites of those parts. Abraham stood before his dead, and, stranger and sojourner as he was in the land, without "any inheritance in it,—no, not so much as to set his foot on,"[1] he asked the children of Heth to give him a burying-place wherein to bury his dead. Then, of course, they replied, that he might choose which of their sepulchres he liked. He fixed upon that of Ephron, with the cave of Machpelah, before

[1] Acts vii. 5.

Mamre; and Ephron, like the rest, said, My house is thy house, and my heart is thy heart; "the field give I thee, and the cave that is therein give I thee; in the presence of the sons of my people give I it thee: bury thy dead." But Abraham, who would take nothing from the king of Sodom, could no more receive in gift a possession of land from a Hittite chief, as if they both were on a par, and of the same worship, instead of being divided asunder,—Abraham by his faith, and the Hittite chief—may be the grandsire of Cheta-Sar, the Hittite king mentioned in the treaty made with him by Ramses II.—by his worship of Seth and of Baal, that doomed his land to destruction.

But Abraham might hold it by purchase, that implied no covenant, friendship, nor union between him and his Hittite hosts. Ephron, therefore, easily mentioned the four hundred shekels which he doubtless all the time intended to ask, and, somehow or other, to obtain as price of the field with the cave of Macpelah. Abraham then weighed to Ephron, as the custom was in those days, four hundred shekels—literally "*avoir-dupois*"—"current money with the merchant;" and the field and the cave, and the trees in the field and in all the borders round about it, were made sure to Abraham for a possession, in the presence of the children of Heth.

And Abraham, having thus secured his purchase, buried Sarah his wife in the cave of Machpelah, which is before Mamre.[1]

[1] Gen. xxiv.

CHAPTER XII.

ELIEZER FETCHES REBEKAH.

ABRAHAM was now getting full of days, and gradually withdrawing from the scene of active life. His task was fulfilled, and his errand was done. He had laid the foundation of the Church of God, as called out of the world though living in it; having been called of God by virtue of his birthright as descendant of Shem. He had heard, believed, and answered that call, and obeyed it, by denying himself and his own wishes, only to do the will of God; and by thus making sure his calling out of Ur, and his election, of which his being called was a proof—he had won for himself "the righteousness which is by faith and which his works made perfect." And, as being thus righteous, he received from God an outward and visible token of His covenant with him; and, for his sake, with those of his house born of him, even though not of the promise.

Thus was Ishmael, the son of the bondwoman, cast out, though circumcised, because he was not, like Isaac, son and heir of the promise; and likewise, also, were Abraham's other sons, though themselves of the circum-

cision, portioned out while he lived, and sent away from Isaac his son, to whom he gave all that he had.[1] A figure, even then, at the very beginning of the Church of God, of the outward sign of covenant with Him, conferring on some men certain temporal benefits, though not the right to the promise made only to those, on whom the seal of God's covenant was a virtual ratification of their righteousness by faith in that promise.

In other words, as we see Isaac alone a member of God's real covenant, as child of the promise, among his many brothers who, like him, shared outwardly with him the visible badge of being descended from Abraham, so, also, in after years, were Isaac's own descendants severed, not only from the world as a people, but also, among themselves, "not all were Israel that were of Israel." And so, again, in the Church of Christ at the present day, though all be baptized, yet are not all on that account living members of His Body, the Church; but only they "who have the answer of a good conscience," that, by faith in the promises made them in Christ, of which their baptism is to them a pledge on God's part, they "give diligence to make their calling and their election sure." Such are "blessed with the faithful Abraham," because with him, also, they are righteous of the only righteousness man can possibly have—the righteousness which is by faith in Christ's sacrifice, proved, by faith, and by the fruits thereof, good works—to be real and living.

But Isaac, as Abraham's own son with whom God had made His covenant, could himself make no union either with the Hittites or with the other heathenish tribes of Canaan among which he resided. The chil-

[1] Gen. xxv. 5, 6.

dren of Shem could not intermarry with those of Ham; from among the daughters of Shem alone, therefore, could Isaac, who was to be a figure of "Christ and His spouse the Church," receive his one wife.

Abraham knew this. He therefore called his old servant, Eliezer, and bound him by an oath not to take for his son a daughter of the Canaanites—although on good terms with them, as sojourner among them,—but to go to the land of Shem, to Abraham's own kindred, and thence to bring a wife to Isaac.

But if the woman would not follow him, what then? "Beware," said Abraham unto him, "that thou bring not my son thither again." On no account was Isaac to leave the land promised him, though he, too, were only to be a sojourner therein as his father had been. No; but "the Lord God of heaven," said Abraham to Eliezer, "Who took me from my father's house and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying: Unto thy seed will I give this land; He shall send His angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence."[1] That was how Abraham acted in life; that was also why he prospered. "The angel of the Lord encamped around His servant that feared Him,"[2] and went before him to prosper his way.

Fraught with such credentials, Abraham's ambassador left for the land of the sun-rising, for the plains of Aram below the hills of Ararat. He took ten of his lord's camels, gaily caparisoned, no doubt, in the white, red, and black trappings of the south; one of which, more gay than the rest, was intended for the bride elect, for the daughter he was to bring

[1] Gen. xxiv. 7. [2] Ps. xxxiv. 7.

back with him. He also took presents and jewels of gold and silver; a goodly retinue and fit offerings from one of the princes of the East, and likely to carry weight with his servant's message. By slow and plodding marches did he wend his way into Aram-Naharaim, or Mesopotamia; first across the Jordan and the Hauran, through the desert of Tadmor to the old fords of the Euphrates, the way Abraham had come, and then straight on to Haran, the city of Nahor, which he reached at sunset, and alighted there, where all camels do—at the well.

It was the hour at which women, the daughters rich and poor of the town, came to draw water and to chat together, as they do there at this day; when the slender shadows of the grass around the well begin to lengthen, as the sun nears the western plain, and at last sinks below it, colouring red with his last rays the rude stonework of the well of Nahor. Then is the solitude most solemn; when the glare of day mellows into the rich evening tints of purple and gold, and the earth seems to breathe again after the heat of noon; when the silence of night creeps on apace under the whole heaven, and one star after another is lit in the firmament above, until the whole of that cloudless sky sparkles with brilliant worlds of light—that shine there as they shone of old—there, on the land of Abraham.

No sooner was Eliezer come than he, intent upon his errand, prayed the Lord to speed his way, and to give him a token whereby he should know the daughter of the land appointed for his master's son.

"And it came to pass that before he had done speaking" Rebekah, daughter of Bethuel and niece of Nahor

and of Abraham, came with her pitcher on her shoulder to draw water. Eliezer knew by the dress she wore that she was neither betrothed nor married; and his keen eye and good taste descried in her graceful form one fit to become the young princess of the south. He asked her to drink out of her pitcher after she had filled it at the well; "and she hasted and let her pitcher down upon her hand and gave him drink,"—true to the letter, and as you see it done at every well in the East. The pitcher is let down from the shoulder with wonderful agility; it is then held with the left hand and borne by the right, and thus brought to the mouth of him who asks for the boon of a draught of water, in the land where every day one may both feel and understand the meaning of the Psalmist's words: "All my fresh springs are in thee,"[1] and the full value even of a "cup of cold water."

Then, according to the token Eliezer had asked of the Lord, Rebekah said to him, "I will now draw for thy camels;" and she hasted to fill her pitcher at the well and to empty it into the troughs for the camels to drink,—Eliezer all the while "wondering if the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not."

He then gave her a nose-ring and bracelets of gold, such as are worn there at present, with which he won her heart at once—what Eastern damsel could have resisted it?—and only then, satisfied as he was that his prayer had been answered, did he ask her, "Whose daughter art thou? And she said: I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, whom she bare unto Nahor. She said moreover, We have straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in."

[1] Ps. lxxxvii. 7.

"That must be a good stranger," thought Rebekah, as she ran and told her mother and her brother Laban of what had just happened. Then Laban came out to the well, and in the true style of the desert said to Eliezer: "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; why standest thou without? for I have prepared my house and room for the camels."

Eliezer then came to the house and went in. The camels were made to kneel down, their girths were loosened, and the pack-saddles taken off their backs and thrown upon the ground; while chopped straw and grass were given them to eat. And water having being brought to wash the strangers' feet—a real luxury in the East, and also the first act of hospitality—food was served; when they all sat down on the ground, Eliezer to speak, and the rest to listen.

But he would not eat until he had told them his errand, who he was, whence he came, and how the Lord had so far prospered his way as to answer him respecting the daughter he sought, by the very token he had asked Him to give.

To which they said, as of course they must—"The thing proceedeth from the Lord: We cannot speak unto thee bad or good. Behold, Rebekah is before thee; take her, and go; and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken."

Then Eliezer bowed to the earth and worshipped. The Lord had led him, and had sent His angel to make his way to prosper; and it had prospered as He alone could make it prosper. Eliezer then, as of due, made to Laban and to Bethuel presents of gold and silver, and of other precious wares; they ate and drank, and he tarried there all night.

But early in the morning Abraham's servant, having fulfilled his errand, was anxious to return, and asking leave of his hosts to go, said to them: Send me away unto my master. Nay, replied Laban and his mother; let Rebekah stay with us awhile, and then take her and go; we cannot part with her so soon.

"Hinder me not," replied Eliezer, "seeing the Lord hath prospered my way; send me away that I may go to my master."

So they called Rebekah and asked her if she would go with the man. "And she said: I will go."

Then they sent her away with her nurse. She mounted the camel especially intended for her, her nurse following behind on another; and Eliezer and his men departed from the house of Laban the day after their arrival there; to wend their way back again athwart the plains, across the Great River, and through the desert of Tadmor to the home of the Amorite, and thence to the downs of Beershebah.

But as they came near, Isaac, who happened to be by the well of Lahai-roi, whither he had gone to meditate at eventide, lifted up his eyes and saw the camels coming. And when Rebekah saw him she covered herself with her veil, and lighted off her camel in token of respect; for she had heard he was Isaac, Abraham's son, and Eliezer's master. And Isaac took her to wife, and loved her, and was comforted after his mother's death.

No picture of Eastern life could be more simply and more truthfully drawn than it is in this chapter of Holy Writ. Naught but truth could be so real. It reads as it may be seen there at the present day. It was true there nearly four thousand years ago; it is true there still.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DEATH OF ABRAHAM.—ISAAC AND REBEKAH.

I.

About this time, "Abraham gave up the ghost and died in a good old age," a hundred and seventy-five years old, and was buried by Ishmael and Isaac his sons, in the cave of Machpelah, by the side of Sarah.

And Isaac dwelt by the well of Lahai-roi; and God blessed him as He had blessed his father before him. Yet Rebekah, like Sarai, had no children; and Isaac entreated the Lord because of her, and she conceived. But as the children struggled within her, she went to inquire of the Lord—of Melchizedek, says the Syrian Church,—Who told her that she should be the mother of two distinct nations, and that the elder should serve the younger. And Isaac was threescore years old when the twins were born.

The boys grew; Esau as a cunning hunter, a man of the field; Jacob as a plain man dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau for his venison, but Rebekah loved Jacob for his own sake, and because of the word

of the Lord of Whom she had inquired, and that was soon proved true.

For one day, as Esau returned from the fields, hungry and weary, while Jacob was seething pottage, Esau said unto him, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage, for I am faint. Then Jacob—with an inkling of his race—said, Sell me this day thy birthright; and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. "And Jacob gave him bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way; thus Esau despised his birthright." He chose the present world, his hunting, and the daughters of Heth, rather than the promise which of right would have been his as Isaac's eldest son, through whom the race out of which the Messiah should be born, was to be maintained; and thus Esau showed himself to be "a profane person."[1]

"Behold, I am at the point to die," said he; "and what profit shall this birthright do to me?" He saw nothing better than the present time, and his heart was in nothing beyond the world around him. The promise was naught for him; his quiver was a better portion than hope, and the wilderness a safer and more sure inheritance than the Land of Promise in which his father sojourned, and which his father already inherited by faith in God's covenant with him.

Taking, then, with the whole Christian Church, Isaac as a type of Christ, not only as Abraham's son, promised, given, and then offered in sacrifice, but also as the husband of one wife, signifying Christ and His Church,[2] we further see in his two sons Esau and

[1] Heb. xii. 16.

[2] S. Ambrose, however ('De Isaac et Anima') wrote a whole book full of the most beautiful sentiments, as all his writings are, to show that Isaac and Rebekah are an emblem of Christ and of the soul of man that is united to Him.

Jacob a figure of the wide, radical difference there is between the two great divisions in the Church—those who live by faith and those who do not. They have all apparently the same privileges; they, too, like Esau and Jacob, have the same right to God's promises, ratified to them in His covenant with them by baptism; but the one set despise the birthright they have received and their heavenly inheritance, and sell it for the mess of this world's pleasures and follies, or even of its so-called wisdom and intellect, and lose that inheritance; the other set give diligence to make that birthright sure, so as not to lose their inheritance, by walking towards it through faith working by love for Him Who promised it. As, then, of old, the elder served the younger, and he that came last was first; so, also, now, in the words of Christ Himself, "the last shall be first, and the first shall be last; for many be called, but few chosen."[1]

II.

After these things there was a famine in the land, and Isaac went to dwell with Abimelech, king of the Philistines, in Gerar. And the Lord appeared unto him, saying, "Go not down into Egypt; sojourn in the land, and I will be with thee, and I will bless thee."

Why, then, could not both Abraham and Jacob have been thus kept and saved from hunger in the same land in which they also were strangers and sojourners, but had to go to Egypt to be fed there?

Isaac, consistently with the features and circumstances of the Church of Christ he was meant to figure,

[1] S. Matt. xx. 16.

could not go down to Egypt to be called thence. He might, indeed, dwell among the Philistines, as the Church often does, even now-a-days; but he was also to show how God can preserve her, and how He does bless her there, while beset with enemies from without. For there also, had Isaac to let Rebekah pass for his sister, as she would really be called, being his first cousin, lest he should suffer on her account. Perhaps may we see in this the term of endearment often applied to the Church by Him Who is not ashamed to call her members "His brethren," and His Church "His Sister, His Spouse." Perhaps, also, do we see in the wells of Esek and Sitnah,—of contention and of hatred, about which Isaac's servants had to strive with the herdmen of Gerar,—some of the treatment Christ endured for the sake of His Church, and the treatment also to which she is subject both from within and from without; as the well of Rehoboth may also represent either His rest from the contradiction of sinners, or the room He at times gives His Church, when for His sake, she has had to suffer tribulation and hatred from the Philistines among whom she lives.

But "Abimelech, who had said to Isaac, Go from us, for thou art much mightier than we," now came with his friend, the captain of his host, to seek Isaac's friendship, and to make a covenant with him. What else is this than the jealousy the Civil Power always shows towards the Church, at all times and in all countries? "Go from us," says the world, "thy might and ours cannot agree; we would rather continue as we are, Philistines, and worship Dagon and Ashtaroth, than have thee among us. We do not worship the

same God; we worship Mammon; thou servest God; thou art an eye-sore to us; go from us, then."

Yet no sooner had Abimeech said this than he came, returned with some of his honourable men, and again courted Isaac's friendship. With all its bluster-ing and hatred of that Church, the Civil Power in many a country and at many a time has had to seek the friendship of that Church, or at least to make an outward agreement with her; finding, as it did, that it is impossible for a State to prosper without the help of the Church. Isaac then made an agreement with the Philistines mutually to live on respectful terms; and more they could not do.

And it came to pass when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim that he could not see, that he sent Esau to the field to get him some venison. But when he was gone, Rebekah—knowing, says the Syrian Church, from what she had heard from Melchizedek, that Jacob should inherit the blessing—used, in order to secure it, the stratagem with which we all are familiar. She so far succeeded, that Isaac did bless him; and that, when Esau returned he found little or no blessing left in store for him; but "when he would have inherited it, he was rejected; for he found no place of repen-tance"—that is, no way to change his mind—though he sought the blessing carefully with tears.[1] He had sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, because he thought scorn of the blessing; and now when, partly from re-morse, from fear, or from the just idea prevalent in the East, that a father's blessing is worth having, Esau regretted what he had done, and would have un-done it if he could.

[1] Heb. xii. 17.

But he could not. He had acted deliberately in preferring the wilderness, with Hittite wives, to the land of his father's sojournings with relations among his Shemite kindred. Thus, the blessing he received was only temporal; he had chosen the sword and the bow for his portion, and with these he was to win for himself a name and a place in the earth; yet only as servant of his brother.[1] He therefore hated him, and consoled himself for the loss of his birthright and of the blessing it entailed, by saying, "The days for mourning my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother."

But God watched over Jacob. Rebekah, who, whatever may be said of the way in which she secured the blessing of Isaac for Jacob, believed in the promise made to him, warned Jacob to flee from before Esau, and to go to his uncle Laban, at Haran, until Esau's anger was turned away.

[1] 2 Sam. viii. 14.

CHAPTER XIV.

JACOB GOES TO PADAN-ARAM.

I.

"And Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Padan-Aram, to the house of Bethuel, thy mother's brother; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban, thy mother's brother; and God Almighty bless thee."[1] The daughters of Heth might be suitable wives for one who had despised his birthright; but no child of the promise could intermarry with any of the Canaanites, who were doomed to destruction as soon as their iniquity was full.

Jacob then went out from Beershebah, and went towards Haran. "And he alighted upon a certain place in the land of the Jebusites, and there tarried all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed,

[1] Gen. xxviii. 1, 2.

and behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it." And the Lord stood above it, and spake to Jacob, and promised to bless and keep him in His way, to be with him, to prosper him, and to multiply his family, to which He promised him to give the soil on which he lay. Jacob then rose up in the morning, and set up the stone he had used for his pillow, and poured oil upon it, and called the name of the place Beth-el, the House of God. And he vowed that if the Lord blessed him and brought him back to his father's house in peace, "then the Lord should be his God," and the stone he had set up there should be the House of the Lord, unto Whom he, like Abram, would surely give the tenth of his increase.

Thence Jacob went on his journey alone. He crossed, as his grandfather had done before him, the hill and dale country of the Girgashites, of the Hivites, Perizzites, and other Canaanitish tribes, and then through the virgin oak forests of Bashan, and the plains of Tadmor, to the fords of the Great River. As the Lord had been with Abraham when He brought him from Haran, so also was He with Jacob on his way thither. "Fear not, O Jacob, said the Lord; I am He that created thee, and He that formed thee, O Israel. When thou passest through the rivers they shall not overflow thee; for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One, thy Saviour."[1]

The promise made at Beth-el was again repeated a thousand years later, as having been fulfilled in pledge of its being ratified unto the end. The people of Israel, like their ancestor, went through many and sore

[1] Is. xliii. 2, 3.

trials, but the Lord was with His people, and saved a remnant thereof, as the Lord is with His Church at present. She, too, has to pass through fire and water, and to wrestle with principalities and with the powers of the darkness of this world; but He promises that "no weapon that is formed against her shall prosper," and that as in all her affliction He was afflicted, He, the angel of His presence, saved her, and in His pity redeemed her, bare her, and, we know, will give her His heavenly kingdom—the Land of Promise, whither she tends.

II.

"And Jacob came into the land of the people of the East"—of the East, even for Eastern folks themselves. And so it is—more east than they; nearer the sun-rising?—at all events, fresher of the morn of life on earth; where man is at once carried back with Jacob to the very scene of his first impressions of that land.

"For he looked, and behold, a well in the field"—that is, in the open country, without boundaries or divisions of lands, with no other limits than the horizon to the east and to the south; and to the north, the distant outline of the mountains of Ararat, blue and white, that fringe the plain of Padan-Aram, and blend it with the hazy sky of Meshech.

There, in the neighbourhood of Haran, Jacob fell in with a party of shepherds, with their flocks by the well—the common "tryst" of the desert alike for men and sheep at noon, and for women at even. And a great stone—exactly as we see it thereabouts and elsewhere in Syria to this day, a stone as round as rough-hewing will make it—was upon the well's mouth.

"And thither were"—as thither are at present—"all the flocks gathered. "And they rolled the stone from the well's mouth," which in this case is a wide, flat stone with a round opening cut through it, "and watered the sheep" with a leathern bucket let down into the well; "and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in its place"—all accurately described and told in detail, because all new to one coming from the south, where wells in general are differently made and differently secured at the mouth.

"Brethren," said Jacob, in true Eastern fashion, to those shepherds, "know ye Laban, the son of Nahor?"

"We know him," said they; "and here is Rachel his daughter coming with the sheep"—as many a Rachel does there at this day.

"Lo!" said Jacob, "it is yet high day, neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together?"—for the night; "water ye the sheep and go and feed them."

"And while he yet spake, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she kept them,"—as many a rich man's daughter may be seen doing, with gold or silver bracelets, with gold head-ornaments, and with silver anklets on her feet. For as sheep—that is *ghănăm*, sheep and goats together—form the principal wealth of their owner, either he, though he be rich, if he have no children, or if he have any, his sons when not foraging, and his daughters as long as they continue with him, take care of the sheep. The daughters bring them home to the fold at even; but the sons often abide with them in the field all night, keeping watch over them, and guarding them from wild beasts. Often have shepherds to risk their life; but the sheep

are their own; they even know every one of them by name, so that they "give their life for the sheep" if need be; "they know their sheep" with which they spend their life, and the sheep know them and their voice, and they will follow no one else. For there the shepherd leads, and does not drive his flock.

But when, either in Padan-Aram or elsewhere, in Canaan, the owner of the sheep is obliged to hire a man to tend his sheep, or where a few poor men of the village or camp, who severally own two or three sheep at the most, club together to hire a man to go with their sheep to the field, the case is different, and the sheep also fare much worse. He is "a hireling and careth not for the sheep," because the sheep are not his own; so that if he see "the wolf coming he leaveth the sheep and fleeth, and the wolf catcheth them and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling and careth not for the sheep." But, said He Whose words were well understood where He spake them, "I am the good shepherd and know my sheep, and am known of mine. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold,"—not of Israel— "them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd," the fold of the Good Shepherd Who fed his flock in the wilderness, and "Who gave His life for the sheep."

Jacob now told Rachel who he was; and, in very pastoral style, kissed her. Then she went home and told Laban, who came out and embraced his nephew —whom he called his brother—and bade him come to "his house," which may have only been his long, patriarchal tent of black hair, divided into compartments closed all round for the women and children,

and for the household duties, apart from the open space under the roof of the tent, that was the reception room. A carpet, woven by the women of the family, was spread on the ground with a few cushions on one side of it, and there the family at even assembled and the guests by day; there was Eliezer received when he came for Rebekah, and there also was Jacob brought by Laban as kinsman and a wayfaring man.

And thus he continued the guest of the family for a whole month, after which Laban said to him: "Behold, thou art my brother, shouldest thou therefore serve me for nought? Tell me what shall thy wages be?" But Jacob loved Rachel, and said, "I will serve thee seven years for Rachel, thy younger daughter. And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed to him but a few days, for the love he had to her."

But when the time had expired, Laban gave him Leah, his eldest daughter; so that Jacob had to serve seven years more for Rachel.

And the Lord blessed him in the house of his father-in-law, who with somewhat indifferent ideas of honesty and uprightness, was getting jealous of Jacob, and at the same time anxious to keep him in his service, because he felt and acknowledged that God had blessed him for Jacob's sake. He then made an agreement with Jacob, which he thought greatly to his own profit. But it turned out to Jacob's advantage, on whose behalf God overruled what Laban could not hinder, until at last Laban's sons began to murmur at the wealth Jacob had gotten for himself; and they easily worked on their father to think so with them, so that Jacob's position in Padan-Aram was no longer

endurable. "Then said the Lord unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers and to thy kindred, and I will be with thee."[1]

So Jacob sent for Leah and Rachel out into the open country to his flocks, and there told them that they should leave with him for his own land, as their father's wily conduct towards him was no longer to be borne. Both Leah and Rachel agreed, saying that their father counted them as strangers, that he had sold them, and had also devoured their money. "Now, then," said they to Jacob, "whatsoever God hath said unto thee do."

Jacob's flocks were three days' journey from those of Laban; Laban also was gone to shear his own sheep, and Jacob took advantage of his absence from home to effect his escape.

III.

It was a very different departure from that of Abraham a hundred and fourscore years before. Abraham left deliberately and at leisure, and forsook his home for a land he had not seen; Jacob left in haste and by stealth, with all the wealth God had given him in the house of his father-in-law. He therefore "set his sons and his wives upon camels,"—a truly Eastern picture,—and, followed by all his cattle and flocks, he left Padan-Aram for Canaan, and came to the Great River, which he crossed, and set his face towards Mount Gilead. Here Laban overtook him, after seven days' journey from Haran, in hot haste and great anger. But God warned him not to hurt Jacob, and after much expostulation on the part of

[1] Gen. xxxi. 3.

Laban, and much recrimination on that of Jacob, the meeting ended in a covenant between them, sanctioned by sacrifice on the mound of stones set up as witness thereof, which Laban called in Aramean, Jegar Sahadutha, and Jacob in Hebrew, Gal-eed. Then Laban returned to Haran, and Jacob went on his way.

And the angels of the Lord met him. Who or what were they? We know not, but Jacob knew them; they were, perhaps, some of those he had before seen at Beth-el—his warders, ministering spirits, who had been sent both to minister to him on his lonely way to Haran, and to protect and keep him from all harm in Padan-Aram, heir as he was of God's salvation. Here, then, they again met; and Jacob saw them and called the place Mahanaim, in memory of his encounter with this small band of the heavenly host.

Hence he also sent a message of peace to Esau in Seir,—a wise move on Jacob's part; a propitiatory act of deference to his warrior brother, and of security for himself, a plain man dwelling in tents. All he could hope for, after what had taken place, was that he and Esau might live on distant but respectful terms, seeing they must continue neighbours. It was mere prudence on Jacob's part; an act of worldly wisdom urged upon those who are told "to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves." And the messenger returned, saying Esau was coming to meet Jacob with four hundred of his men.

"And Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed." Impossible otherwise. It would have been rash of him to say, God will deliver me; and take no further measures for his own safety. But Jacob did not do that. He divided his retinue into two bands, so that

if one were smitten the other might escape. He, in short, did his best; that is, he made the best use of the sense and prudence he had to aid him in his emergency; and after having done so, and feeling that of course it alone could not avail, he laid the case before the Lord, as David, Hezekiah, and others after him did; and he prayed, urging as a claim to God's protection the very blessings he had received from Him; thus taking God's gifts as pledges of His faithfulness. Well done of Jacob! and of him to say that, whereas he had crossed this same Jordan with his staff only, on his lonely march to Haran, he now, through God's blessing alone, crossed it with two bands, which could not have been given him as signal tokens of care, of watchfulness, of protection, and of love, merely to be made over into his adversary's hand. God had, as it were, to vindicate Himself in defending His servant; His servant knew it, trusted in it, while doing all that prudence could dictate, and then he left the issue thereof with Him Who orders all things aright.

Thus did Jacob choose the best of his kine and of his flock, dividing it into several parts, and sending one part after another, every one under the charge of a servant who was told to say to Esau, when he met him, that this drove was a present to "my Lord" from "his servant Jacob," who was coming in the rear.

The plan succeeded; or, rather, Jacob's sensible and prudent measures were blessed of Him in Whose hands he had committed them. Present after present reached Esau ere he met his brother, and mollified, as with ointment, the man who, at his father's death, had comforted himself in the thought that his hated brother should then be slain. After the presents came

the wives and the little ones, whom, thought Jacob, no man would hurt; they were made to cross the brook Jabbok that day at even; and Jacob remained alone this side of it until they all had passed. What would come of all he had and of all he had sent before, if his brother smote him? Therefore came he last.

And while thus anxiously waiting for the issue of his arrangements ere he crossed the brook, a man—one of those mysterious beings which appear every now and then from the unseen world, and as mysteriously return thither—"wrestled with Jacob until the breaking of day." Did he withhold Jacob from crossing the brook with the rest for the purpose of wrestling with him? And how and why did he wrestle in so human a manner as to let Jacob prevail against him; since by merely touching his thigh he made him halt for life; and since anon Jacob said of him, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved"? We can, of course, give no positive answer to all this, though Justin Martyr[1] thinks it was Christ. More would have been told us if more we ought to know about it. Suffice it that He who thus wrestled with Jacob, and Whom he knew so far as not to let Him go without a blessing from Him, changed his name from Jacob to Israel, "because as a prince he had power with God and with men, and had prevailed."

But He would not tell His name, though He blessed Jacob there. A figure to us how, when face to face with God, He also wrestles with us, and we continue firm in the faith and in prayer,—we so far, as it were, prevail with Him, as never to part without a blessing for having thus struggled. He wrestles to prove our

[1] Dialog. Tryph. p. 355.

faith and sincerity. If we be firm and true to Him, He will leave a blessing behind Him as a pledge of our earnestness in pleading with Him.

IV.

At sunrise Jacob passed over Penuel, and saw in the distance Esau coming to him with his four hundred men. He then divided the children unto Leah and Rachel and to the handmaids; and passing before them, "he bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came to his brother. And Esau ran and met him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him: and they wept."

Nature, some would say, got the better of Esau's feelings of revenge. But others, speaking more correctly, would say, that Jacob's prayer had been answered; and the interview he dreaded most was thus one of untold comfort to him, when the brother who, he thought, was coming against him, offered to be his safeguard, and to leave some of his men as a protection to him against the lawless inhabitants of those wild regions.

But Jacob was satisfied with the result of his interview, and with the renewed promise of peace and goodwill on the part of Esau, who at first, and prince-like, declined Jacob's present of cattle, but who at last, also prince-like, accepted it. Jacob, therefore, declined his offer of an escort, and Esau went back to Seir; while Jacob passed on to Succoth, and thence to Shalem, afterwards called Salim, not far from Enon, where John baptized, and a city of Shechem. There he pitched his tent before the city, and bought of the children of Hamor the parcel of ground upon which he

settled at his entrance into Canaan, and there built an altar unto the Lord, and called it El-elohe-Israel, God the God of Israel.

He was now once more in Canaan. He had passed over the Jordan, not with his staff only, but as a powerful prince, who had prevailed with God and with man, and rich in very much cattle. God had fulfilled His promise that He would bless Jacob, and Jacob lost no time in fulfilling his vow, and in publicly confessing that the Lord should be his God. As with his father Isaac, and with his grandfather Abraham before him, no halt could be made for any time, and the camp could not be pitched, without an altar whereon to renew the covenant with the Lord, and to offer the sacrifices which were a sanction thereof.

For the Patriarchs, as heads of their families, were both princes and priests of the Lord; foreshadowing the Church, all members of which are to be kings and priests unto God. And not only was this service inseparable from their existence as strangers and pilgrims sojourning in a country not their own, and among inhabitants at enmity with them, and with one another,—but the altar of the Lord sanctified the household, blessed the family, and warded off pestilence and danger from the camp.

CHAPTER XV.

JACOB COMES TO BEERSHEBAH.

I.

JACOB was now in Canaan with his twelve sons, who then trod unawares the very ground that was to be given to their children. Little did Judah know whither his fame would reach, nor Benjamin suspect the blessings he would inherit; and little did those "twelve sons of one man in the land of Canaan" then dream of themselves as heads of the twelve tribes of Israel, mystic shadows of the twelve Apostles of the Lord, and of the foundations of the Heavenly Jerusalem. Little did they know the part they should act, and the place they would fill in that "family of Christ which in heaven and earth is named," and that the names of the shepherds of Shechem, like those of the fishers of Galilee, should pass from mouth to mouth among the inhabitants of this earth, and be for ever sung by angels above. Unconsciously did they thus wander over the hills and dales of Canaan, in search, as

they thought, of pasture for their flocks, or of a shelter for their tents; though in reality thus taking possession by promise of the country that should be theirs, as an emblem of another and better land.

Thus led and protected, did they sojourn therein. "For the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob."[1] And thus did Jacob remove by God's order from Shechem to Beth-el, where God had appeared unto him when he fled from before Esau his brother. But before they started, he said to his household, and to all that were with him, "Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments; and let us arise and go up to Beth-el; and I will make there an altar unto God, Who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went."

So they gave to Jacob all the strange gods that were among them, and that even Rachel had brought from her father's house; they hid them under an oak at Shechem, and then started, thus cleansed, for Beth-el, the House of God.

II.

We may picture to ourselves that patriarchal family striking their tents at dawn, leading their camels, and gathering their flocks that fed at leisure in the plain at the foot of Mount Ebal, "by the parcel of ground Jacob gave his son Joseph," to wend their way down the vale of Lebonah, and thence up the narrow glens and rocky heights of the border-land of the Girgashites and of the Hivites, until they reached the high,

[1] Gen. xxxv. 5.

craggy table-land, on the western slope of which are yet seen the scattered remains of ancient Luz, afterwards named Beth-el by Jacob.

What must have been his feelings on first returning thither and seeing the very stone he had set up for his pillow in that memorable night, some thirty years before, when God appeared unto him then alone and poor, and going he hardly knew whither! This stone was to him a witness of God's faithfulness; here, therefore, did Jacob pay his vow. The Lord had blessed him. From the brow of the descent just above Beth-el he might now see, in the distant haze to the southward, the heights that marked the scenes of his childhood and his father's house, whither he was going in peace. The Lord, therefore, should be his God.

Here, then, did God appear to Jacob a second time,[1] to ratify to him His promise and covenant made here also once before; and Jacob built there an altar, and called it El-beth-el, "the God of Beth-el"—the God, the faithful God, Who answers in adversity, and Who guides His servants by the way they should go, until He bring them in peace to their Father's house; through rivers, across deserts and wildernesses, in drought, in trials and in fears by the way. But the waters do not overflow them; in the desert and in the wilderness they find food prepared by Him; in drought His comforts refresh their soul, and in trials Himself delivers them from all their fears. Thus does God deal with His Church and with every member thereof: thus did He deal with His Church in Canaan, with Jacob and with his sons after him.

[1] Gen. xxxv. 9.

And they journeyed from Beth-el; and as they came near to Ephrath, which is Beth-lehem, Rachel died, after giving birth to Benjamin, and was buried there; and Jacob set up a pillar over her grave. Hence they went on and tarried a while by the tower of Edar, and thence came to Isaac, who was then living at Mamre, to the city of Arbah, which is Hebron, and where he died at the age of an hundred and fourscore years, "being old and full of days."

As Christ brought his Spouse the Church from the land of the sun-rising to the realms of His glory, to His Land of Promise in Heaven, where He is, so also did Isaac never leave the Land of Promise; but he brought thither his bride from the plains of the East, and with her also dwelt in Canaan all the days of his life.

Here also, did Esau and Jacob again meet by their father's death-bed. And they buried him in Abraham's tomb, in the cave of Machpelah before Mamre, by the side of Rebekah his wife.[1]

[1] Gen. xlix. 31.

CHAPTER XVI.

JOSEPH.

I.

We now come to the last of the patriarchs; to the last of those figures in God's Church at her beginning, of those types or shadows of better things to come, "the body of which is of Christ." As mere shadows they can, of course, bear no greater resemblance to the objects that cast them than shadows do, and that is, in the outline only; they can show very few if any details —and those of outline only—to correspond with the subjects they typify, albeit they bear broad, unmistakeable features of resemblance to them.

Thus have we in Abraham the distinct, marked, and trenchant outline or shadow of the Church as chosen, then called out of the world, and walking by faith towards truths and promises held before her as objects, either as yet not seen, such as promises, or sometimes but imperfectly descried, such as truths, yet seen by faith, believed in and hoped for unto the end, that

bear witness of their reality through the power of the faith they create. While, in the body and in form Abraham was but a man of those days; and, therefore, is he not a figure of the Church in all the daily details of his pilgrimage on earth.

Likewise, in Isaac, we cannot help remarking the broad outline or shadow of Christ, as only Son offered in sacrifice, and afterwards as Husband of His Spouse, the Church, and of the two wide and distinct divisions in the children of that Church, between those who by faith believe the promises and those who do not believe them, and who choose this world for their portion. Yet the details of Isaac's sojournings would not apply to the same object.

So, also, with Jacob, as husband of Leah and of Rachel, the Jewish and the Gentile Church, patriarch and head of the twelve tribes of Israel, we have the broad outline of the Church on earth, and of the heavenly Jerusalem, founded "on the twelve Apostles of the Lamb," thus foreshadowed by the twelve sons of Israel, laying, as it were, the foundation of their future possession of the Promised Land, during their wanderings in it as shepherds and watchers of their flocks. But such a shadow gives us no details.

Neither does it give us any details in the case of Joseph; albeit the son beloved of his father, hated of his brethren, betrayed and sold by them, coming down from the Land of Promise to Egypt in the form of a servant, there obedient in all things, and there tempted, falsely accused, put in prison, then at once brought out from the depths of a dark dungeon to sit next to the king in honour and in the glory of the kingdom; thus humbled and raised from prison "for the great

deliverance" of his own family and of the kingdom in which he lived: and then at last his reconciliation with the same brothers who had sold him as a slave, and who no longer knew him as Ruler and Prince of the land; his forgiveness and love for them,—are so many shadows, the outline of which is plain enough to show what is meant by them, but the details are to be sought for, and are found in the Body that cast the shadows—in Christ. Were such types applicable in all their details, and not in their outline only, they would no longer be types or shadows, but images. The Sun of Righteousness, however, gave no image, but only cast shadows of His coming.

II.

"And Jacob," we read, "dwelt in the land wherein his father was a sojourner, in the land of Canaan." There, in the vale of Hebron, did he spend his days, amid the home duties and also the home troubles of patriarchal life, that was best suited to his tastes, peaceful and plain, on the lea of Mamre, or by the groves of Kirjath-Arbah, the Beth-arbaim of the present day. Thence did his herds and his flocks roam at leisure from the downs of Beershebah over those of Maon and of Carmel, on to the heights that overlook the Sea of the plain, and, beyond it, the jagged outline of the hills of Moab.

His sons, as their wont would be, fed their own sheep, seldom at home, but oftener at a distance, as they moved, according to the season, from the hills to the dales between them, and from the parched downs of the south to the better and fresher pastures of the Girgashite valleys in the north. But Joseph, the son of

his father's old age, stayed at home with him and his younger brother Benjamin. In and around the tent, he fed the lambs and reared the kids that had lost their dams. He would at times help to grind the corn for the bread of the family, and assist the women in other household duties; then go with his pet flock to the well close by, and feed it until the evening. But when the sun, setting behind the swelling hills of Gerar, peered through the groves of Arbah, glinted in a last farewell gleam of light on the hills beyond, and at last left the tents of Mamre in the cool shade of even, Joseph would return, bringing with him his flock; and going through it, as shepherds do there at this day, he would set his kids on the one side and his lambs on the other, and fold them for the night.

His father loved him for his mother's sake and for his own, and he made him a coat of many colours, as they are worn by children in that land—either of patches of wool of different colours in the woof, or of patches of different coloured cloth sewn on and embroidered all round,—that differed greatly from the coarse brown cloak worn by his brothers, and singled him out as a special object of their father's love. Moreover, as Joseph could not help repeating to Jacob the irreverent sayings of certain of his sons, whose birth gave them no instinctive love for their sire, all his brethren hated him; and all the more for his telling them with the consciousness of innocence, the remarkable dreams he had. One was, that they were all binding sheaves in the field, when his sheaf stood upright, and theirs bowed to it; and in the other, the sun and moon and eleven stars did obeisance to him. Even his father rebuked him for it,

while observing the saying; but his brethren hated him.

Then they left Mamre and went to feed their flock in the portion of ground belonging to their father in Shechem. And Jacob sent Joseph to inquire after them—a three or four days' journey at the least among the Jebusites, Hivites, and Girgashites of the land,—a perilous march in those days for a lonely lad of seventeen. But God watched over him, and he came to Shechem; his brethren, however, had left, and were gone on to feed their flocks among the wooded glens and rich pasture valleys of Dothan, whither Joseph went after them.

But no sooner did they see him in the distance, ere he came to them, than they conspired against him, and said, "Behold, this dreamer cometh. Come, now, let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him; and we shall see what will become of his dreams."[1] But Reuben heard them, and turned them from their evil purpose of putting him to death, saying, "Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness—that he might rid him out of their hands, and deliver him to his father again."

Meanwhile Joseph came up to them. But instead of inquiries after his father and their home, which he expected his brethren would make, they took him, stripped him of his coat of many colours—the badge of their envy—and cast him into the pit shown by Reuben; and there they left him, regardless of his tears and of his entreaties for mercy at their hands. For they hated him; and what more could they do next

[1] Gen. xxxviii. 20.

to wishing him dead, than to kill him outright. But they shrank from the actual shedding of his blood, that would then have stuck openly to them in clots of gore, in spots of guilt in the eyes of all; yet they might leave him to die, or they might compass his end in some other way.

Having thus disposed of him for a time, they sat down to eat bread, to their noonday or evening meal, —bread made of the wheat hardly ripe, which they plucked up in one of the neighbouring fields, beat and shelled, as well as rough handling would do, then ground in a mortar, or between two flat stones, then mixed with a little water, and baked on the fire embers or under the ashes thereof,—bread that was growing and in the ear not an hour before. This and cheese—small round cheeses made of sheep's milk, as white as snow and as hard as brick—with a few onions, and a draught of the clearest water they could get, was the meal to which they sat down—the same bread which their brother shepherds of the present day bake for themselves while in the field tending their flocks; and the same kind of cheese also, which is, however, suited only to a shepherd's life.

But while they were thus sitting together, discussing what they had better do with Joseph so as to get rid of him, a band of Ishmaelites, Midianitish merchants, came in sight, on their way from Gilead to Egypt.

"Let us sell him to the Ishmaelites," said Judah to his brethren; "let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother and our flesh."

"And his brethren were content. So, when the Midianitish caravan passed by, they took Joseph out of

the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver." He was off their hands; they would see no more of him; they would hear no more of his dreams. Once out of sight,—could he be out of mind? No; as they confessed to themselves afterwards, in the terror of remorse. Yet they thought they should be rid of him when once far away in Egypt,—a drop cast into the sea, and blending with it; a leaf torn off a tree in the forest and carried away by the wind. Yea, to mortal eye. But God was with Joseph.

He left, then, bound as a slave, sold into Egypt. His brethren thought all was over; and the twice ten pieces of silver they counted—two to every brother, since Benjamin was at Mamre—was a price greater in their eyes, no doubt, than the tales and "the dreams" of that hated younger brother. Dothan was a long way from Mamre, and the father would not soon hear of him; nothing could be easier than to trump up a story and make the old man believe it. A kid was then slain, and the blood thereof was spilt over the coat of many colours, which was then sent by one of the shepherd boys; and the story told was likely to be true, "This have we found; know now whether it be thy son's coat or no."

Jacob did, of course, know it as the coat laid on the darling child of his first and best loved wife. "It is my son's coat," said he; and never thinking that his own eldest-born would of all others deal otherwise than fair and true by him, Jacob could only draw one fact from the gore smeared over the garment of his child, "An evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces." What else could then the poor father do, but give way to the most heart-

rending grief? And this he did. "He rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days."

His grief was real. But what shall we say of that of his sons who, knowing what they had done, and the false part they were acting, "rose up to comfort him"? What could—what did they say to him? No wonder that he refused to be comforted with the cold words of conscious falsehood. His grief was a greater comfort to him, and his sorrow more soothing. None of your consolation for me, said he; you feel not as I do; my son is dead. "I will go down into the grave unto him, sorrowing." Thus did Jacob mourn for him.

III.

And thus, too, did Jacob and his sons think that Joseph was gone,—the one that he was dead and no more; the others, that he was sold, a slave, departed, and that they had seen and heard the last of him.

Yet, how marvellous is the thread of God's Providence, leading and guiding His servant; ordering all things for the best; and in this case, turning the foulest purposes of hatred and murder to the greatest ends of love and salvation! Who would have thought—who among men could have seen in that lad of seventeen, stripped of his raiment and sold as a slave to a horde of wild traffickers of the desert, the future deliverer, not only of the country to which he was taken, but of his own family, of the very brothers who had thus basely sold him away from his home and kindred? No man could, but God might; and God did not only see, but order it all according to His purposes of wisdom and mercy. Joseph, the lad thus leaving the

gleus of Dothan, hated, betrayed, and sold into bondage, was, we are told in the East, "the head of the spring that may be covered with the foot; but let it flow; it soon swells into a mighty stream, until it empties itself into the boundless main."

So with Joseph. His family must go into Egypt and sojourn there, and there be afflicted four hundred years; therefore is he sent "before them to preserve life by a great deliverance." But for him, his own kindred would have perished with the rest of Egypt; and God's counsels would have been thwarted, and His promise made of none effect. Joseph, then, was sent to preserve his brethren and their posterity in the earth; to instal them in the best part of the land, and to leave them as a people, to suffer the same bondage as that to which they had doomed him, their brother. They proposed, but God did dispose all events as He would.

"And Joseph was brought down to Egypt, and sold to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, and captain of his guard."

CHAPTER XVII.

JOSEPH IN EGYPT.

I.

We have as yet no certain clue to the Pharaoh under whose reign Joseph came to Egypt, as no traces of Joseph's residence at the Egyptian Court have yet been discovered among the monuments of that land. The common opinion, however, in ancient chronicles and in some of the Fathers, that the Pharaoh then reiging was Apophis or Apepj II., the last of the Sasu or Shepherd race, seems probable, as we shall have occasion to see elsewhere more in detail. And the seat of his kingdom was, as in the days of Abraham, Avaris, also called Tanis, and not Memphis. But this is also a mere conjecture; at least we must speak as of a conjecture only, of things we cannot tell for certain.

One expression, however, deserves notice. We are told that Joseph was bought by "Potiphar, the Egyptian, and captain of Pharaoh's guard." Why should

he be styled "the Egyptian" in Egypt, if it were to be taken for granted that all there at the court, were Egyptians? His name, too, "Potiphar," savours of southern extraction. A genuine Egyptian of that time in Egypt—by which is always understood Lower Egypt, Upper Egypt being called "Pathros" in Scripture—would have been called "Patiphrah" or "Petasra," Potipherah or Petosiris; that is, belonging or dedicated to the Sun "Ra," or to Osiris "Asra."

In Upper Egypt, however, "Har," the Hawk, sacred to the Sun, took the place of the bulls Mnevis and Apis, also sacred to the Sun, and identified with the River in Lower Egypt; while the Sun "Ra" was chiefly worshipped as "Amun" at Thebes. Patiphrah, then, of Lower Egypt, would in the same sense be "Patiphar" at Thebes, that is, belonging to or sacred to "Har," Horus; while "Petasra" of Tanis would find an equivalent in the other Theban patronymic "Petamun."

Potiphar, therefore, might be "the Egyptian" captain of the guard at the court of Apepj II., who, though of the Shepherd or Sasu dynasty, and said to worship only Seth or Sutech, the god of the Hittites, under the form of an ass, and thus hated by true Egyptians, who scratched his name off their monuments, might, nevertheless, have imbibed many Egyptian notions, and found it necessary to conciliate his Egyptian neighbours by taking in his pay one from among them, Potiphar "the Egyptian." But this is, of course, a mere surmise; it is a ripple only on that wide sea of the unknown past; yet it may show the way the wind blew at that time on the broad surface of Hapi-muau, of the River, when it covered the land.

Potiphar, then, bought Joseph "of the hands of the Ishmaelites, which had brought him thither, and the Lord was with Joseph. And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand,"—a result his brethren did not anticipate. Potiphar, therefore, made Joseph overseer of his house, "mr-èi," bailiff, or steward, as we find it on most Egyptian monuments, of all that he had; "and the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake." The Lord's servant, though humble and despised, shed around him such a sweet fragrance of good deeds and of the blessing that rested on him, that his heathen master rejoiced in his light. He saw Joseph was overruled by a deep principle, which neither Har, nor Asra, nor yet Amun ever gave; he was, indeed, only a bondman and a Hebrew; but the Lord was with him, and his master left all he had in his hands.

But Joseph's prosperity in his master's house, and the peace of that house were suddenly overcast by the conduct of his master's wife, who, failing in her object, had nothing left but falsely to accuse him to her husband. He believed her story, and Joseph was at once cast by him into prison. This prison was under the control of Potiphar, as captain of the king's body-guard, but under the immediate superintendence and management of the keeper of the prison, with whom Joseph found favour. Joseph was innocent and unjustly treated, therefore was "the Lord with him and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison, who committed into Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison, and looked not to anything that was under

his hand; because the Lord was with him, and that which he did the Lord made it to prosper."[1] Whether in the pit at Dothan, or in the dungeon of Tanis, the Lord was with Joseph, and brought him out of both, because Joseph feared Him.

So also was He falsely accused, and unjustly condemned and cast into the prison of the grave, He "Who was in all things made like unto" us His brethren, "and was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." He, too, "was numbered with the transgressors," not for His own sins, since He is the Just One, but for the sins of others, even for our own. "He was taken from prison and from judgment; and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of his people was he stricken."[2]

II.

I will pass by, as here out of place, what Arab writers tell us of Rā'el, and Persian poets of Zuleikha, as well as the rhapsodies of Mahomet, and of the Rabbis on the same subject. But this chapter in the history of Joseph receives a very remarkable illustration, in some particulars almost word for word, from a papyrus written in the days of Merienphtah, son of Ramses II., and that belonged to Seti II., son of Merienphtah. It is written in the finest hieratic hand of those palmy days of Egyptian letters, and although five centuries later than the probable date of Joseph's coming to Egypt, it shows, nevertheless, that the domestic morals of the people had not improved since his time.

[1] Gen. xxxix. 21. [2] Is. liii. 8–12.

The narrative—an Egyptian novel—is written in simple style, and begins thus :—"Here is the story of two brothers, sons of the same father. The eldest was called Anepu, and the youngest Satu. Anepu was married, became a householder, and treated his younger brother like his son."

Then follows a pretty description of Satu's skill in farming; and how the two brothers went day by day to the fields to till the ground, to sow or to reap, whether in the early morn or at noon, and home at even; and how the cattle were fed, the sheep folded, and the evening spent happily between Anepu, his wife, and Satu his brother.

This went on for some time, until one day, when the two brothers were together ploughing, the elder said to the younger, "Go to the village and bring me seed from our house to sow." He went, and found Anepu's wife occupied in platting her hair—as we see the fashion to have been in those days, in innumerable small plaits which in some instances came down to the waist,—and asked her to give him some grain for her husband who was waiting for it in the field. "Go, she replied, "to the granary, and take what thou wilt; my hair would drop if I moved." The youth went therefore and took a large quantity of grain, which he could hardly carry.

As he was coming back from the store-house she said to him: "Thou hast there not less than five measures of corn on thy shoulders; how strong thou art! I have noticed thy strength,"—for her heart knew him,—and she loved him. She then addressed him in the words of Potiphar's wife, and said, "See, I have dressed myself in my best on purpose for thee."

The youth, however, became like a panther in a fury when he heard that woman's improper language; and she then began to be afraid. But he said to her, "I have always looked upon thee as my mother, and I look upon thy husband as my father. I cannot do this great wickedness; but give me an order that I may follow, and I will obey thee. Yet will I speak of this to no one, neither shall it come out of my mouth in presence of any human being."

He then went to his brother in the field, and they finished their work; and in the evening they returned home. But while Satu was gone with the oxen to the stable, Anepu's wife put on the air of a woman who had suffered violence, prepared to tell her husband that his younger brother had thus dealt with her. When her husband came into the house he found his wife lying as if she had been ill-treated. She did not come, as her wont was, to pour water on his hands; she lay down in total darkness, without saying a word. Then her husband came to her and said, "It is I that speak to thee."—"Say no more," replied she; "thy brother when he came to fetch the corn found me alone, and he made improper advances to me. He spake, but I did not heed him. I said, 'Am I not thy mother, and is not thy brother like a father to thee?' I said yet more than this; and he was afraid, and did violence to me, to make me promise I should say nothing to thee about the matter. If, therefore, thou allowest him to live, I will make an end of myself."

"Then Anepu became as furious as a panther. He sharpened his sword, and went and stood with it in his hand behind the stable door, in order to kill his brother

when he returned to his cattle in the course of the evening."[1]

The narrative follows in the same strain, and in a style which in the original is simple and elegant, and of considerable interest, independently of the light it reflects, as it were from the tombs, on the truthful record of the inspired writer of Genesis. This light is yet more remarkable in the originals, when we compare the Hebrew with the Egyptian idiom; then are we driven to admit that both this chapter in Joseph's history and this Egyptian papyrus are faithful accounts, —the one of a story suggested by the manners of the day, that completely bears out and confirms what the other says did actually take place under like circumstances some five hundred years before.

Thus, we have only to wait patiently, until day by day, Truth coming forth even from the depths of Amenti, and surging from the realms of death, draws aside the veil that shrouds the traditions of the past only to throw light on the witness of the records that are rightly named by the prophet—"the Scripture of Truth."

[1] This summary is taken from Vte. de Rougé's translation of the D'Orbiney papyrus.

CHAPTER XVIII.

JOSEPH IN PRISON.

I.

And while Joseph was in prison, two of Pharaoh's officers, his cup-bearer or butler, and his chief baker, offended him, "and he put them in ward in the house of Potiphar, the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph was bound; and the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them, and they continued a season in ward."[1]

"And they dreamed a dream, both of them, in the same night," and the countenance of each was sad in the morning, by reason of his dream. Joseph noticed it, and asked them, "Wherefore look ye so sadly to-day?" They answered that they had each had a remarkable dream, which they could not get explained; albeit they each felt that his dream was a warning to him. "Do not interpretations belong to God?" said Joseph, who was still waiting for the fulfilment of his own dreams at Mamre; "tell me them, I pray you."

Then the chief butler or cup-bearer said, "In my

[1] Gen. xl. 1-4.

dream behold a vine was before me, and in the vine were three branches, and it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth, and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes. And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand."

And Joseph said, "This is the interpretation of it. The three branches are three days. Yet within three days Pharaoh shall restore thee unto thy place, and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler. But think of me, when it shall be well with thee, and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house. For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews"—how Joseph must have thought of the sun setting on the hill of Gerar, of his home, and of his father at Mamre; of the kids and the lambs he fed there!—"and here, also, have I done nothing that they should put me into this dungeon." Little did Joseph himself think that his innocence and his unjust imprisonment, were both features in the part he was acting as an example to the Church of those days; and that his sufferings and humiliation were the appointed and only practicable way to his future elevation and glory. But it was all ordered; and God was working it out in His own way, and in His own good time.

II.

Certain free-thinkers—that is, men who from ignorance and overweening conceit, will believe nothing

that they do not understand, and embrace every opportunity of gainsaying Holy Scripture—have had the assurance to tell us that the history of Joseph is a story of a much later date, and certainly not anterior to the reign of Josiah, because Herodotus, whom such men respect more than the Bible, said there were no vines,[1] or, rather, that no vine grew in Egypt; that no wine was made there, detested as it was, says Plutarch, by all true Egyptians, who did not offer it to their gods, and looked upon it as upon the blood of Typho, their evil spirit,—this again, being confirmed by what Herodotus says elsewhere,[2] that the wine drunk in Egypt was brought by Greeks from Phœnicia, etc.

One does not know, however, whether to smile at such pitiable ignorance, or to grieve at what looks like a wilful perversion of facts, on the part of men whose learning, if real, and whose intention, if honest, ought to have taught them better.

For, first, if we compare the original account of this dream in Hebrew with like idioms in Egyptian narratives, we find delicate touches of truth that never could have been invented. Thus the cup-bearer, describing his office, says, in the Hebrew rendering of his conversation with Joseph in Egyptian, that he dreamt he was placing the cup "upon the palm of Pharaoh's hand,"[3] an expression which Joseph, speaking Egyptian, but with a Hebrew turn, and according to his own ideas, renders "into Pharaoh's hand."[4] Now, the cup-bearer spake not only with the knowledge of his office, which Joseph could not have, but also according to facts. For the cup of Pharaoh was, no doubt, like that of Thothmes III. in the Louvre, and

[1] Bk. ii. c. 77. [2] Bk. iii. c. 6. [3] Ch. xl. 11. [4] v. 13.

like very many Egyptian cups, represented on the tombs of Upper and of Lower Egypt, and given in the works of Rosellini, Lepsius, and others,—that is, like a flat saucer, about an inch and a half deep, exactly like the "cup" used among Arabs in Egypt, in the desert and elsewhere, that was handed by the cup-bearer, and handled by Pharaoh, as one sees it done every day among Arabs of the desert, and in the only way in which it can be safely done. This cup or saucer, when filled by the servant or attendant, is placed upon the flat open palm of the left hand of him who is to drink out of it; he then takes it off the palm of his left hand with his right hand, and carries it to his mouth. Thus did Pharaoh's cup-bearer place the cup upon the palm of the king's [left] hand, after he had pressed the wine into it.

Joseph, on the other hand, speaking either without knowledge of the cup-bearer's office, and therefore more generally, or, perhaps, also thinking of the cups used in Canaan, more of the shape of a goblet, and probably not unlike the pot of manna stamped on the Shekel in after time,—makes use of the generic term "into Pharaoh's hand." Both expressions, "upon the palm of the hand" and "into the hand" are as idiomatic in Hebrew as in Egyptian. But in Hebrew "upon the palm of the hand" is never used in connection with "a cup," which in Palestine, being of a different shape from the Egyptian cup, was also held differently.

These two distinct idioms used for the same thing, given in the same language, Hebrew, must be admitted to be a remarkable proof of internal evidence of the truthfulness of the writer; the more so as, when

[1] Ch. xl. v. 11.

the cup-bearer mentions his holding the cup with the left hand,[1] to press the grapes into it with the right, he makes use of the same expression as Joseph.[1] Moses, who probably lived at the court of Ramses II. with the Princes Sha-en-djam and Ateph-amen, sons of Ramses, knew the nature of both the cup-bearer's office, and of the shape of cups in Egypt and at the king's table; and he wrote what he saw and knew to be true. Such touches occur repeatedly in his style; but they lie deep below the surface. They can be discovered only by a comparison of the hieroglyphic and hieratic monuments we have, with the original text of the Pentateuch; and this is not everybody's work.

So much, then, for the accuracy and truthfulness of the sacred text. Now, secondly, as to the testimony of Herodotus when set against that of the Bible, let me remark:—

1. That it did not stand very high for truthfulness with his own immediate Greek friends. Thus Diodorus says of him, "that he is found out to have followed conjectures and fancies which contradict one another."[2] Strabo says, "he talks nonsense;"[3] while Josephus distinctly tells us that "Herodotus was convicted of having told many stories about Egyptian subjects, from sheer ignorance of the matter."[4] And lastly, Plutarch, who devotes a whole treatise "to the evil disposition of Herodotus," says, that it was not to be wondered at, if his simple easy style should take in many, who allowed themselves to be misled by his good-nature. Strange coincidence between him

[1] The distinction between "upon the palm of the hand" and "into the hand" is unfortunately lost in the Authorized Version.

[2] Bk. i. c. 37. [3] Bk. xvii. c. 6. [4] C. Ap. bk. i. c. 14.

and other later historians !—of whom, may be, S. Cyril of Jerusalem said, as it were by anticipation, that even in his day, there were many who spoiled men through their philosophy and vain deceit, while the Greeks led them astray by their soft tongue and fair language."[1]

2. The assumption that Herodotus denies that vine grew in Egypt, rests only on simple ignorance of Greek. Herodotus says that there were no vineyards in the small part of Egypt he had seen, by comparison with his own land, which was a vine country. But nowhere does he say that the vine did not grow in Egypt, as it would have been contrary not only to what he writes elsewhere, but to all proofs from history, of which I can here only mention the principal.

(*a*) The vine trailed on forked sticks, as at the present day in Egypt, is a hieroglyphic symbol for "wine," and also for "vine," used from the very highest antiquity.

(*b*) The vintage, and the process of making wine, by pressing and boiling, and the storing thereof, is found painted in tombs of the Fourth Dynasty, long anterior even to Abraham's visit to Egypt.

(*c*) In one of them of the Fifth Dynasty, both the "haq," or barley wine [beer], and the wine of the grape are mentioned as offerings to the gods. And on the panel of a tomb where the produce of the farm of the owner is painted, we find thirteen servants coming to him, every one with a jar on his shoulder, and between every one also the word "erp," wine, cut in hieroglyphics, that there might be no mistake as to the contents of those jars.

(*d*) In the same tombs and in others of a later

[1] Catech. iv. Col. ii. 8.

date, but anterior to Joseph, no less than four or five different kinds of Egyptian wine are mentioned—the red, the white, the garden wine, wine made of grapes growing in gardens, the wine from the northern sea-coast, etc.

(*e*) Wine, also, forms a part of almost every offering to the gods recorded either on paintings or in sculptures, on the walls of tombs, of public buildings, or on votive tablets and monument-stones for the dead. It is also expressly stated in an Arameo-Egyptian papyrus, published by the Abbé Bargès,[1] that wine, Egyptian as well as Phœnician, both raw and boiled, was offered to Phtah and to Osiris: so that evidently Plutarch's saying is a mistake. The soul, also, in her passage through Amenti, the inferior world and region of the dead, says, "I take offerings on thine altars, O Osiris, and I drink wine." Herodotus, moreover, tells us that more wine of the grape was consumed in Bubastis, at the festival of Basht or Pasht (Diana) than in the whole year besides; assuredly not by Greeks alone.

(*f*) Likewise Hellenicus,[2] who was twelve years older than Herodotus, tells us that the vine was first discovered at Plinthine, in Lower Egypt, near the Marcotic lake, where grew vines celebrated in the days of the Ptolemies and after them.

(*g*) Athenæus also tells us there were vineyards all along the Nile, both in Lower and in Upper Egypt. But as they grew best on the sandy soil at the foot of the hills on either side the river, and oftentimes at at some distance from it, Herodotus might sail up the Nile from the sea-shore to Memphis without seeing

[1] Paris, 1862. [2] Athen. bk. i. c. 25.

one vineyard, not even those of Kakem, on the plain to the left, or on the hills to the right, as he sailed up the Canopic branch of the river.

(*h*) It would carry us too far to give more examples of a fact so well known of old as the excellence of Egyptian wines. Suffice it to mention in addition to the above authorities, Strabo, Diodorus Siculus, Alciphron, S. Clement of Alexandria, the author of the Periplus M. Erythræi, Horapollo, the Book of Asenath, Makrisi, Abulfeda, Mosudi, Es-Soyuti, Abil-soroor, Sahidic fragments published by Mingarelli; S. Macarius, Cosmas Indopleustes, S. Benofer, S. Sinuthius, S. Matthew; and among recent authorities, Prosper Alpinus, Pococke, Forskal, Sir G. Wilkinson, A. Stamm, and Nordmayer, to which I may add my own eye-witness of the existence of the vine in Egypt from one end of the country to the other. The dream, then, of the cup-bearer is not a fiction, neither is on that account the history of Joseph a romance of the days of Josiah, or of those of the Ptolemies, if not of the Captivity! The vine grew and wine was made in Egypt from the first beginning of history, and long before Abraham and Joseph went thither. One account, indeed, which tells us that wine was first discovered there, agrees with what Osiris says of himself, "that he made the vine and wheat to grow in the land of Egypt."[1]

III.

And when the chief baker saw that the interpretation of the cup-bearer's dream was good, he then told his own dream. He was carrying on his head three white baskets, and in the uppermost basket there was

[1] Turin Pap., Seiffarth, Theol. Schriften, p. 8.

all manner of bakemeats for Pharaoh; and, said he, "the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head."

Pictures of the chief baker of Ramses IV., in a tomb at Biban-el-Moluk, represent Pharaoh's chief baker carrying a basket of bakemeats on his head. From that and other pictures of the same kind, it seems that instead of reading "white baskets," we should read baskets of white bread, or of cakes, loaves, and biscuits, either circular, like rings, or riddled with holes, exactly after the pattern of cakes and biscuits of the present day.

Whether the chief baker told the truth or not regarding his dream—for the expression "when he saw that the interpretation of the other dream was good" makes one doubt he did—the interpretation of his dream was against him. In three days, said Joseph to him, "Pharaoh shall hang thee on a tree, and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee."

"And it came to pass on the third day, that was Pharaoh's birthday"—a national festival like the birthday of the Ramses, as told on the walls of Medinet-Abou at Thebes,—"Pharaoh restored the chief butler into his office, but hanged the chief baker, as Joseph had interpreted to them."

"Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgat him"—as, of course, he would; and the poor guiltless Hebrew youth, falsely accused and unjustly cast into prison, had, men would have thought, lost his last and only chance of escape. But God was with him; and his deliverance was at hand; though two full years more had Joseph to remain in prison ere he should come out thence, as he must have done—in the third year of his imprisonment.

CHAPTER XIX.

JOSEPH IS BROUGHT OUT OF PRISON, AND IS RAISED TO GREAT HONOUR.

And it came to pass at the end of that time that God, Who was working His own ends slowly and surely, and Who was in His own way preparing to fulfil His promises to Abraham and to bring his children into Egypt,—warned Pharaoh in two dreams of the judgments that were coming upon him.

Pharaoh dreamed; and behold, he stood by the river, when there came up out of the river seven well-favoured kine, fat-fleshed, and that fed among the tall, rank herbage that fringes the stream. And after them came up out of the river also seven other kine, ill-favoured and lean-fleshed, that did eat up the seven well-favoured and fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke.

"And he slept and dreamed a second time; and behold seven ears of corn came up upon one stalk, rank and good; and after them seven thin ears, blasted with the east wind came up and devoured the seven rank and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke; and behold it was a dream."

Then in the morning he sent and gathered all the wise men of the land, and all the magicians for which it was famous, and he told them his dreams. But in vain did the whole college of "the scribes of the hall of life" and of the "Sekha-u amone-tu," the men learned in mysteries, worry themselves to find the interpretation of those dreams. The whole wisdom of Egypt was at fault. It was man's extremity. But it was also God's opportunity. Pharaoh's cup-bearer, then, at last bethought himself of Joseph. "I do remember my faults this day," said he to the king. "The king was wroth with his servants, and put us into ward in the house of the captain of the guard. While there, we both dreamed a dream, which a Hebrew youth, servant of the captain of the guard who was there with us, interpreted to each of us. And as he interpreted it, so it was."

Light then flashed from heaven on Pharaoh's path. He sent at once; and who was fittest to go but the captain of the guard himself to his own house, with his own hands to release his own prisoner by the supreme will of his king? At Potiphar's approach the gates of the prison flew open, and he went in and told Joseph: Pharaoh sends me to call thee. Come forth.

Then "they brought him hastily—they made him run out of the dungeon," for the king's commandment was urgent. They shaved his head and beard without which he could not appear at court, and changed his raiment; and he was brought in to Pharaoh, who sat upon his throne surrounded not only by his guard of honour, by the splendour of the kingdom, in a hall built with massive pillars in the severest taste of

Egyptian art, but who also had around him there the whole assemblage of the wise and learned men of the realm, with their rolls of papyrus, their magic wands and legends. All puzzled, baffled in their wisdom, and looking one at another in dumb dismay, shame, and envy when they saw the captive, a Hebrew, brought from prison and stand before the king to do what none of them could do—to deliver from God the interpretation of the dreams by which God Himself had warned the king, and with him the whole land of Egypt. They were helpless to save themselves; their boasted knowledge was to them of no use, and their wisdom, great as it was deemed to be, was now, in sooth, made foolish and vain.

"Then Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream; but there is none that can interpret it"—not one of these learned doctors and wise men thou seest about me. But I am told that when thou hearest a dream thou canst interpret it; is it so?

"And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not in me;"—no, it is not in man to know the things of God, except He reveal them to him—"God, not I, shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace."

And Pharaoh told his dreams—dreams that none but an Egyptian could have dreamt. The seven kine, fat and well favoured—the seven cows sacred to Isis, of whom they were an emblem—coming up out of the river, that was also worshipped as Hapi-muau, the father of the land it fertilized, and one with Apis at Memphis and with Mnevis at On, were familiar objects.

A picture of these seven kine with their bull may now be seen in the Ritual of the Dead,[1] a roll of papyrus

[1] Ch. cxlviii., ed. Leps.

some fifty feet long, wherein is described the passage of the soul through the realms of Amenti, and generally found whole or in part with most mummies in their cases—a ray of light, a touch of local colouring, a voice from the tombs in answer to the small-talk of gainsayers of the Truth. There Atum, the evening sun, the sun of Amenti, is thus addressed, in behalf of the soul of the man or woman with whose body a copy of the Ritual is laid:—"Hail, thou Sun God, brilliant in his own orb! Life appearing on his mountain! this soul also, declared just, knew thy name; this soul knew the seven cows with the bull to give them bread and haq [barley wine] among the living."[1]

So did Pharaoh; so did also the wise men and magicians at his side, who might be holding a copy or a part of this same Ritual in their hands.

But what about the seven kine lean and ill-favoured that also came out of the river and devoured the other first seven? There was enough in this to startle the king and to make his "diviners mad." A legion of Theban warriors come to dispute with him his territory, or a band of Chetas, the dreaded Hittites of Canaan, at his gates under the leadership of some grandsire of Sapalulu or of Marusar, renowned Hittite chiefs in the days of Ramses II.,—would not have terrified the Pharaoh of Tanis more than his dream astonished him.

So also with the one that followed. The seven ears rank and good on one stalk of the Egyptian wheat, was no marvel where the land yields a hundredfold, and multiplies by sevens and by tens what is given

[1] Ch. cxlviii. l. 9.

singly by other soils. Who, then, would notice such a yield in the land of all others, where wheat of many kinds grows with a luxuriance known nowhere else? But those seven ears thin and blasted with the deadly breath of the south-wind,[1] what of them, since they alone remained after the other seven had disappeared?

To all this Joseph said: The dream of Pharaoh is one; and "for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice, it is because the thing is prepared by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass."[2] "Preparing" He must have been; for both the seven years of plenty, the result of a favourable inundation for seven years running,—a thing unknown in Egypt since that time,—and the seven years of famine which followed, must each have resulted from causes outside the land of Egypt and under the control of no one but God.

But Joseph's interpretation, followed as it was by the advice, that the king should choose some able man to lay up stores during the years of plenty against the years of famine, was so plausible, so plain, and so straightforward; it carried such conviction to Pharaoh's mind, and to that of his court, that Joseph himself was at once chosen as being the only man able to act, since he alone had among all the rest, "the Spirit of God," and none was so discreet as he. "Thou shalt be over my house," said Pharaoh to Joseph, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled; only in the throne will I be greater than thou. See, I have set thee over the land of Egypt."

[1] This will be explained further on, at the passage of the Red Sea.

[2] Gen. xli. 42.

"And Pharaoh took off his ring from the thumb of his left hand, where the king's signet was usually worn, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck"—a badge of honour granted seven times to Ahmès, one of the generals of Ra-seqenen-Tau-aa-qan, king of Thebes, whom Joseph may have seen at the taking of Avaris or Tanis[1]—"and he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had, and they cried before him: Abrech—in Egyptian, "Bow the head," but in Hebrew—"Bow the knee; and he made him ruler ever the land of Egypt."

Thus was Joseph in the third year of his life in prison, raised in a moment from the darkness of the dungeon to the splendour of an Egyptian palace, under the most brilliant sun that shines in a cloudless sky of the deepest blue. Dazzled he might be, but not amazed. God had been with him in the dark prison, and there He was his sun; but now that He had brought him out under the blue vault of the Egyptian heavens, He was to be his shield, and his exceeding great reward; even greater than the glory to which He had raised him through so much affliction.

We then see why two full years were allowed to pass after Joseph's interpretation of the cup-bearer's dream, ere himself should be brought out of prison. He must have come out in the third year of his imprisonment; for it was not until the third day that "He Who went down into the lower parts of the earth," "to preach to the spirits in prison," was released thence. Then was the angel of Death sent into his own lair, to set Him free Whom he fain would

[1] Vte. de Rougé, Tombeau d'Ahmès, p. 19, *seq.*

have held captive for ever, but might not, by reason of the sovereign will of the King of kings, Who holds the keys of Hell and of Death, and unto Whom even the king of terrors himself bows as a servant to his lord.

Thither went that Angel at his Lord's command, with the keys of Death in his hands. At his approach the warders of the gates bowed to the earth, awaiting his behest. He spake; and the clank of bolts fastened from everlasting echoed loud into the very depths of Hell, when the bars of the grave were broken asunder and the prison gates were burst open.

For all?—Not yet. Only for Him, Who, being "the Resurrection and the Life," "brought life and immortality to light;" having been "delivered for our offences," but "raised again for our justification," as "the first-born of the dead," as the "first-fruits of them that slept."

CHAPTER XX.

JOSEPH IS RULER OF EGYPT.

Joseph was then thirty years old. His life, chequered as it had been with humiliation, trial, and sorrow since he left his home in the vale of Hebron, had prepared him for the exalted position to which he was so unexpectedly raised. No one can command who does not first learn to obey. Even He Whom Joseph faintly foreshadowed in some respects, "though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered, and being made perfect, He became the author of salvation unto all them that obey Him."[1] So, also, with Joseph; he learned obedience by the things which he suffered, and being now made perfect, as regards his worldly state and position, since he could not rise higher than he then was—he became the author of salvation, when, "by a great deliverance," he preserved the life of those who hearkened to his word and obeyed his commands.

He was now second in the realm. He wore on his

[1] Heb. v. 8, 9.

finger Pharaoh's ring, with his name, which he received from him in presence of the whole court assembled, a mark of confidence granted to no one else at that court, and an honour every one there envied. In fact, the rule of the kingdom was placed in Joseph's hands, though the sceptre still continued in those of Pharaoh. And, in true Egyptian style, "no man," said the king, "shall without thee lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt."

But, once installed as Ruler of the kingdom, with the badges of his office, it was necessary that he should bear an Egyptian name, by which he should be known and his office understood throughout the land, even by the poorest man in it. Pharaoh, therefore, from whom all ranks and dignities came down upon his subjects, called Joseph DJAPH-NAT-PANCH, "Inspired, or possessed by the God of life;" and gave him also to wife Asenath, daughter of Potipherah, priest of On; the noblest alliance for Joseph, short of the royal blood. For so celebrated was On, the city of Atum the evening sun, that not only were the names, offices, and pedigree of her priests reckoned together with those of the reigning sovereign, but the Ramses and their successors for many generations styled themselves "Haq-An," Governors of On, or Defenders of the Faith in Egypt.

Being now fairly established in power, Joseph went throughout the land of Egypt, laying in stores of wheat in every city, against the coming seven years of famine. He gathered the corn in such abundance that he left off counting it by measure; so that when the years of famine began, not only was the people of the land supplied with food, but as the famine extended

to other countries than Egypt,—though not from the same cause, since in Egypt it depended wholly on the inundation of the river,—we are told that "all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn, because that the famine was so sore in all lands."

Here, again, after setting aside sundry details that belong to the ground on which the shadow fell, we cannot but see in the outline of that shadow the broad features of Him "Who made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death—even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name that is above every name, that at the name of JESUS every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father."[1] We see "Jesus, Who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour;"[2] Whom His brethren put to death, but Whom "the God of their fathers raised up, and exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."[3]

In Asenath, also, whose name implies "grace and wisdom," and who was the daughter of a man of exalted rank and of more than regal influence, like Melchizedek in office and dignity, though not in faith—we cannot but see "the king's daughter whose clothing is of wrought gold, and her raiment of needlework"—the Church as Spouse of Christ gathered out of the world —Egypt, and chosen out thence; while her two sons

[1] Phil. ii. 7–11. [2] Heb. ii. 9. [3] Acts v. 31.

Manasseh and Ephraim, the younger of whom again inherited the greater blessing, represent, as Esau and Jacob did under other circumstances, not only the two great divisions of the Church into Jewish and Gentile, that remind us of our Saviour's parable: "A certain man had two sons;" but also of the radical difference there is among the members of that Church on earth—between those who, having been called and sealed with an outward and visible sign of adoption, are at last chosen and inherit the promises, the few, —and of those who, though they be called, yet choose this world for their portion, who are the many.

CHAPTER XXI.

JOSEPH'S BRETHREN COME TO EGYPT TO BUY CORN.

THE famine was sore in Canaan, and Joseph's ten brethren—for Benjamin was at Mamre with Jacob—went down to buy corn in Egypt, with others that came thither on the same errand. "And Joseph was the Governor of the land, and he it was that sold to all people of the land: and Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth."

"And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them"—they came very little altered in appearance and dress from what he remembered of them at Dothan thirteen or fourteen years before—"but they knew not him." No, indeed. He was seventeen years old when they sold him; they had never heard of him since; he was altered not so much in features, perhaps, as in appearance and position. They were too much awed at his presence and felt too much at his mercy to look at him; they bowed down themselves before him—as the wont is there yet—with their faces actually touching

the earth, and kissing the ground on which he trod, in token of abject submission to him.

Little did they then think of what they once said to him, "Shalt thou, indeed, reign over us? or shalt thou, indeed, have dominion over us?" But he remembered it. He remembered his dreams; and although fully purposed to treat his brethren with mercy for his father's and for his brother's sake, and for their own to forgive them; yet was it meet they should first be made to tremble before him to whom they once and again declared with bitter hatred, they would never bow. They now lie prostrate at his feet, begging their bread and their life at his hands; all the while utter strangers to the part they were made by God to act in fulfilling their brother's dreams.

He, therefore, treated them as spies, and spake to them through an interpreter in a language they did not understand. One must have witnessed the haughty bearing of an Eastern ruler and the cringing terror of his underlings, or of men brought before him for judgment, to form an idea of the attitude of Joseph, but especially of the earnestly supplicating looks with which his brothers pleaded their innocence. "Ye are spies," said Joseph; some of those dreaded and sly Chetas, "come to spy the nakedness of the land." "Nay, my lord, nay; thy servants are true men; they are no spies; they are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest is this day with our father—and one is not."

No fiction ever came near to the artless and touching incidents of this truthful narrative. It never could have been invented as it is; it must have happened, independently of its being recorded in Holy Writ;

and the writer of it did tell the truth. The wonder, then, is, not that it should have furnished Mahomedans with materials for numberless writings in song and in prose founded on the garbled statement given in the Coran;[4] but the greater wonder is, that Christians should try to invalidate this account, to gainsay the truth of it, and to lower it to the level of other stories of a more modern date. Yet, ignorance alone can do so; the more we study the whole narrative in all its bearings, the more it shines with the brightness of artless truth.

"Ye say ye are no spies," said Joseph, in good Egyptian, "by the life of Pharaoh ye shall be proved, and the truth of your words tried." Ye shall not go forth hence except your younger brother come hither. Send one of you to fetch him; meanwhile, and until his return, the rest of you shall remain in prison.

A nod,—only two or three words from Joseph, and those ten way-worn Canaanites are led away trembling with fear, and protesting their innocence to the guardsmen, who do not understand a word they say, and are perfectly indifferent to aught but to a summary treatment of them according to orders given. The prison doors open, they are roughly pushed in, the doors again close upon them, and there is an end of it; pending the absolute will and pleasure of Joseph. But His will was their safety; little as they thought it. He thought of them in ward; he also thought of the famine at Mamre, and that his father and brother were in want. On the third day, therefore, he brought them out, and told them—he did not consult them, for he was lord and ruler over them—to go back and

[1] Sura xii., written at Mecca.

carry home corn for the famine of their houses, then to return with their younger brother; and that he would keep one of them bound in prison until their return. And they did so.

But their conscience was then aroused and made itself heard—as it always does, soon or later. "And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us. And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore behold also his blood is required. And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for he spake unto them by an interpreter, and he turned himself about from them and wept."[1]

No tale ever equalled this; and there is not one stroke to add to the picture. "Then Joseph returned to them again, communed with them, and bound Simeon before their eyes"—probably because Simeon was the one to bind him when sold to the Ishmaelites.

"And Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack," and—in order that they should not touch their corn until they came home—"to give them provisions by the way." They then laded their asses—as one sees it done everywhere in the East—and departed and came to their father and told him how roughly "the man who was lord of the land" had spoken to them, and how he took them for spies, and inquired about their younger brother. But great was their astonishment when, on emptying their sacks, they found

[1] Gen. xlii. 21.

every man his bundle of money in his sack, and showed it to their father. No wonder they were amazed at what God had done to them.

But Jacob would not hear of Benjamin going down to Egypt. He might, if need be, spare Simeon; but he had already lost one of Rachel's two sons; he could and would at no price part with the other. She was gone; Joseph, too, was gone; Benjamin, at least, should remain. "Me," said the father to his sons, "have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin also. All these things are against me."[1]

So thought, and so spake Jacob at the time. But he lived to acknowledge that, as God knew best, so also did He then, as He now does, make "all things work together for good to them that love Him, to them who are called according to His purpose."[2]

[1] Gen. xlii. 36. [2] Rom. viii. 28.

CHAPTER XXII.

JOSEPH RECEIVES HIS BRETHREN A SECOND TIME, AND MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN TO THEM.

I.

But the pangs of hunger were felt in the camp at Mamre, for the famine was yet sore in the land; and all the corn they had brought from Egypt was eaten. Then said Jacob to his sons, "Go again, buy us a little food."

It was, however, of no use unless Benjamin went with them. So Judah came forward and made himself responsible for his brother. In vain did Jacob expostulate; the words of "the man, the lord of the land," were positive: "Ye shall not see my face except your brother be with you." So, then, either Benjamin also must go, or they must suffer hunger, without food for themselves and their families. "Send the lad with me," said Judah; "I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him; except we had lingered, surely now we had returned this second time."

"If it must be so now," said their father Israel, "do this; take of the fruits of the land for a present

to the man; take also double money in your hand, and carry back the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks; peradventure it was an oversight. Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man; and God Almighty give you mercy before him, that he may send away your other brother and Benjamin. If I am bereaved, I am bereaved."

And they went down to Egypt and stood before Joseph. And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them he said to his "mr-èi," to the steward of his house, "Bring these men home, and slay and make ready; for these men shall eat with me at noon."

This took place early in the day, when, in the East, all business is done; ere the noon-day heat invite to rest until the sun verges towards the west, and work is resumed until the evening. It does not, however, follow from this that the Egyptians' principal meal was in the middle of the day; but rather, as in all hot countries, after the heat of the day was over. They always made a light meal at noon, and on that day this meal was made more important in order to give refreshment to the men with the least possible delay. But the men were afraid when they were brought to Joseph's house, and thought it was because of their money. They therefore made friends with the steward, with whom they communed on the subject under the gateway or porch, at the entrance of Joseph's house; but he assured them all was right. He brought them into the house and gave them water to wash their feet, and brought Simeon unto them. And they prepared their present for Joseph against he came home at noon.

And when Joseph came home they offered him the present, and bowed themselves to him to the earth.

He then inquired after their father, and when he saw Benjamin "his bowels did yearn upon his brother, and he entered into his chamber and wept there."

And he washed his face and came out and said, Set on bread. And they set on bread for him by himself, and for the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, and for his brethren apart; the Egyptians not wishing to eat with the Hebrews. And they ate and drank and were merry with him. Joseph was pleased not only to see his brethren and Benjamin, but also to see his plans answer so well, owing to the utter unconsciousness of his brethren as to who he was; and they rejoiced, not by sharing his pleasure, but at having so soon passed from the most abject fear, to the relief and honour of actually being feasted in the Ruler's house. They would have much to tell when they came to their father at Mamre.

Much, indeed; and they were, as they thought, to leave on the morrow. But, even though feasted, they were in Joseph's power; and he, as means in God's hands to bring Israel and his sons into Egypt, wished to make them feel his power and dominion over them, and make them, the eleven, bow before him, as he had seen in his dream their sheaves do before his own, standing up in the field of Hebron. He who by faith in God's promises had served and feared Him during his whole life saw before him his brethren being made to fulfil, though unconsciously, but by God's sovereign will, the dreams and warnings against which they had set themselves up. They had imagined, in their hatred of their brother, and in their ignorance of what awaited them, that they should never be made to do what they would not do; but they were led first by

the pangs of hunger, and then by the helplessness of terror, not only to beg their bread at his hands, but also to acknowledge him as their lord, and to worship him as such. So also with others than Joseph's brethren. The iron hand of what heathens and thoughtless Christians call "necessity" or "fate," but which Christians who walk by faith love to call "the will of God," brings us all to yield to many things which we should never either wish for or anticipate; especially when ordered through the very means we should have least chosen.

II.

Joseph then commanded his steward, whom he might have let into his secret, to fill the sacks of the men with wheat, to put back every man's money into his sack's mouth, and his own silver cup into that of Benjamin. It was so done; and they left at dawn. But "when they were gone out of the city, and not yet far off," Joseph sent in haste his steward after them, to charge them with carrying away his cup, and thus requiting him evil for good. The man overtook them and told them those words. But they, surprised at being suspected of such a deed, very naturally pleaded their innocence, by saying they had returned the same money that was put in their sacks; how, then, could they steal his lord's cup? "Let him," said they, "with whom the cup is found die, and we will be my lord's bondmen."

According to your words so let it be, said the steward. And they speedily took down every man his sack to the ground, and search was made, beginning with Reuben's sack. Of course the cup was not there; neither in Simeon's nor yet in Judah's. "Did

we not tell thee," said they in voluble Hebrew to the steward, "that we had not got it? My lord will not find it." The steward, however, utterly careless, or indifferent to what they said, opens himself, as if belonging to him, sack after sack and—"Here it is!" as he took it out of Benjamin's sack. Benjamin protested his innocence, his brethren likewise; but what could they do in their dismay, but tear their garments in despair, and follow the steward back to Joseph's house?

There they found Joseph. For it was yet early, and he was not yet gone to his public office for his morning's duties; and there "they, the eleven, fell before him on the ground." He then asked them how they could have so dealt by him—as if such a man as he should not be able to make trial, divine and ascertain things beyond their power to know. They denied having taken the cup; yet there it was in their possession. Look at it; engraved, in and out, with strange figures of birds, beasts, and fishes, sun, moon, and stars,—and say that such a cup cannot attest its own presence anywhere?

"And Judah said, What shall I say unto my lord? What shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves?"—And here, again, conscience that gave them no rest, cried, "God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants; behold, we are my lord's servants, both we and he also with whom the cup is found."

"Nay," said Joseph, "he alone with whom the cup was found shall be my servant; you may all go in peace unto your father."

Then followed a scene which, it is a wonder some able artist has not yet adequately treated. While Joseph's brethren lay prostrate before him, Judah

stood up in his shepherd's dress; and, being surety for Benjamin, he took him by the hand, drawing as near to Joseph as he dared, and began to plead as for his own life on behalf of the lad and for his father's sake; while Joseph's countenance betrayed the restraint he put upon himself, struggling with his inward feelings towards his father—"the old man of whom they spake"—and with his love for his younger brother there standing before him in fear, as in presence of a strange Ruler in whose hands his life trembled. And this, under the peristyle of an Egyptian dwelling, chequered with the fitful lights and shadows of the palm-trees outside waving in the morning breeze against a cloudless sky of the deepest blue—may help us to fancy what then took place.

And Judah pleaded indeed. His earnest appeal wrung Joseph's heart, as did his entreaties win him, when he urged him to let Benjamin go: "Thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons; and the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces, and I saw him not since; and if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave." "Oh my lord!" said Judah, "by the old man's tears and by his grey hairs, may it please my lord to let the lad go with his brothers: I will remain and be my lord's bondman instead of him."

"Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him, and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me; and there stood no man with him while he made himself known unto his brethren. He wept aloud, and said to them, I am Joseph; doth my father

yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled and terrified at his presence."

No wonder; they could hardly believe what they heard and saw. But when he said to them in Hebrew, "Come near to me, I pray you;" and they, addressed thus kindly in their own tongue, drew near, and as they recognised the voice, recognised also the features they fain over and over again had tried to forget, but which haunted them even in their dreams—what a conflict of feelings—what memories of Dothan, of Mamre, of fear, of shame, of remorse at having deceived their father in their mockery of mourning with him for his son! while Benjamin, whose faint recollections of his brother were only the fondest affection in the days of their childhood, stood looking on amazed, delighted, and guiltless, first at Joseph and then at his brothers—he and they hardly crediting what they heard: "I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt."

And lest they should quail before him at the recollection of the past, he at once gave them full and free pardon of it all, and said, "Now, therefore, be not grieved nor angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither." I freely and frankly forgive you. What ye did for evil God overruled it for good, for it was "He who sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance."

"So it was not you who sent me hither, but God; and He made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. Haste ye then, and go up to my father and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt; come down unto me, tarry not

and thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and there I will nourish thee."

"Ye see that it is my mouth that speaketh with you." Know ye not my voice? I know yours. I remember Reuben's voice when he pleaded for me at Dothan, and ye would not hear, and how Simeon—but enough; no more of this from me for ever. I am Joseph your brother; I love and forgive you. Go ye up then, and tell our father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all ye have seen; and bring him down hither.

III.

"And Joseph fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck; moreover he kissed all his brethren and wept upon them; and after that his brethren talked with him."

And Pharaoh heard that Joseph's brethren were come, and it pleased him well. So that he sent for Joseph, and told him to take of his wagons for the wives and little ones of his brethren and for his father, and to bring them down into Egypt, where they would occupy the best of the land and be fed there.

Joseph did as Pharaoh commanded; he sent wagons and presents for his father, and his brethren departed. And when they came to Canaan and told Jacob all that had happened to them, and that Joseph was yet alive and governor over all the land of Egypt, "Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not." But when he heard the words Joseph had spoken, and his message to him, and when he saw the wagons Pharaoh had sent to bring him away, Jacob's spirit revived, and he said: "It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive; I will go and see him before I die."

The details of this shadow are of Egypt, Egyptian, and of yore; but the outline thereof is plain to us who see the object that cast it. Djaph-nat-panch, he "in whom is life," who "was taken from prison and from judgment," and whom God exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour "to preserve life by a great deliverance," not only of his own kindred, but first of the land of Egypt—fed, saved, forgave his own brethren last, because they had cast him off and sold him into Egypt into the hands of the Gentiles. As in the case of Joseph, then, who became the Saviour and deliverer of Egypt ere his own kindred shared in his deliverance and support, so also in that of Christ; He became the Saviour and the Deliverer of the world ere His own brethren acknowledged Him as such; since they crucified Him, and cast Him out to the Gentiles, to whom He has been given as a light; while the Jews are still in the darkness of ignorance as regards Him Who has not yet made Himself known to them.

But there will be joy among the Gentiles when Christ's brethren after the flesh acknowledge Him. That time is yet to come. Then will He say to them, I am He Whom ye sold into the hands of the Gentiles, and Whom you put to death. Come near, I pray you, and be not grieved with yourselves that ye sold and denied Me; for through your fall salvation is come to them. But now I am the Saviour of you also, and I forgive you freely. "And so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written. There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins."[1]

[1] Rom. xi. 26, 27.

CHAPTER XXIII.

JACOB COMES DOWN INTO EGYPT.

I.

"And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beershebah, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac."

A memorable day for him. How little did they who struck the first tent of his camp at Mamre dream of the great things that should follow so small a beginning! But Jacob knew it; he looked in faith, beyond the prospect of meeting Joseph and of escaping from the dearth in Canaan to the rich pastures and green woodlands of Goshen, on to the long period of bondage his posterity should spend in Egypt; and beyond that again, to their leaving that land and taking possession of the Canaan he was now leaving, and that should then be theirs for ever, because God had promised it.

Jacob, therefore, halted at Beershebah, sacred by the recollections of Abraham's faith and works of obedience, and by the covenant renewed there with Isaac,

of which he now, so to speak, reminded God, and, through his sacrifice of thanksgiving, called Him to witness that His past faithfulness was for him, Jacob, a pledge of His future mercies. He had led him when he left his father's house at Beersheba, on his way to Haran; at Beth-el He promised to bless him, at Haran he ratified His promise; He had been with him ever since; and He would be with him for the time to come.

Why?—that time was not yet. No; but Jacob knew Him to be the faithful God; he therefore trusted Him until his death, when he handed down his trust and his blessing to his grandchildren, and, placed his hands on their heads, saying: "The Angel that redeemed me from all evil bless the lads." Solemn, touching, wonderful faith in the man who, like his father and grandfather before him, believed, trusted, hoped, waited—"I have waited for thy Salvation, O Lord!"—and even died without receiving the promises which he and they only "saw afar off," —yet "died in faith." And we who walk, as it were, by sight, compared with the dim twilight of those ancient days, what do we hear?—"O ye of little faith, why have ye doubted?"

Jacob then "sent Judah before him unto Joseph to direct his face to Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen; and Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet his father to Goshen."[1]

We do not know for certain where in Lower Egypt the land of Goshen was. Many etymologies have been offered for the word, though none altogether satisfactory. The land of Goshen, however, is called the "land of Rameses,"[2] and the site of Rameses is in

[1] Gen. xlvi. 28. [2] Ch. xlvii. 11.

general said to be at Abukesheb or Kesheid, at the eastern end of Wady Tumilāt, on the ancient canal that joined the Nile with the Red Sea, and not far from Belbeis. That part of Egypt is still the most fertile and the most celebrated for its kine; so that there may possibly be some reason to think with the Septuagint, whose readings in matters connected with Egypt are of some value, that the Hebrew term *lehōrōth*, rendered in the A. Version "to direct his face" may be the proper name of Heroopolis, as it is rendered in the Septuagint. This city was built on the junction of the canal with the Red Sea, and in Egyptian was called Pachtum. It was fortified, and as the frontier City at the entrance of the Vale or land of Rameses, it was a suitable place of meeting for Joseph with his father. In this case it is just possible that "Goshen" might come from the Egyptian "Kah-shen," softened into Go-shen—"the land of gardens" or of pastures. If so, then Joseph must have been at Memphis; otherwise he never could have "gone up" to his father to Goshen; had he been at Avaris or Tanis, he must then have "gone down."[1] But these are mere surmises, which probably will never be settled.

II.

Jacob and Joseph met. "Now let me die, said Israel, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive." We can hardly picture to ourselves the rush of feelings in those two hearts; Jacob, whose head had for two-and-twenty years bowed under the weight of sorrow at his son's death, had now beheld him, the

[1] Unless, indeed, it refer to Upper Egypt or be a Hebrew idiom, implying no direction. Then Joseph might have started from Tanis.

Ruler of the country, and his own Deliverer. In that instant his past grief disappeared like a mist in the rays of an eastern sun; it rose only to show the sun more bright and the sky more blue.—"How I wept over thee, my son! What bitter tears did my eyes shed when thy coat of many colours was brought to me covered with blood! What else could I think than that a wild beast had devoured thee; for I never thought they could have so little pity on my grey hairs as to mock at my heartrending grief. But I forgive them, as thou hast done; and my sufferings are now forgotten in the sunshine of thy presence." "And Joseph fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while."

Then he instructed his brethren, when called to appear before Pharaoh, to tell him that they were shepherds and herdsmen; "that they might dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians."

The land of Rameses was, we have seen, especially adapted for cattle. Districts in that neighbourhood, as Khais, El-kauf, are still celebrated for their kine, images of their grandsires represented on the walls of the tomb of Menophre at Gizeh, and there marked with their number for the service of the king's household: as "No. 43, good ox, king's house," etc. Nevertheless, shepherds and herdsmen among the Egyptians were a distinct class, and not so much respected as among the patriarchal families of Arabia, where owners themselves of sheep and of camels often tend them But the calling of shepherd, herdsman, fisher, and fowler was looked upon as menial, though necessary to the support of the people, even in Upper Egypt; where from local circumstances of country and worship, kine

in general, were not so much valued or cared for as they were in Lower Egypt.

There is an inscription of the Twelfth Dynasty, long anterior to Joseph, in the tombs of Beni-Hassan, on which we read that Amenemha, the governor of the nome of Sah, boasts of having supplied 3000 kine for the king's household; and of "never having hindered either fisher or shepherd, infant, or widow, but of having always been true and just in all his dealings towards them." The expression, then, "for every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians," must refer to the time immediately following the expulsion of the Sasu or Arab shepherd kings, who during two dynasties reigned in Lower Egypt. And since this feeling, prevalent in Egypt towards shepherds, did not exist before the coming of the Shepherd kings, and wore off in the time that followed their expulsion, the reason assigned in this verse for the residence of Jacob's sons in Goshen must have been written by one well acquainted with Egyptian life, and within not a very long time after the rule and government of Lower Egypt had been resumed by native Pharaohs.

To the same kind of feeling and to the same date must we refer the words "that the Egyptians might not eat with the Hebrews, for that is an abomination unto the Egyptians."[1] Joseph's brethren could not, until publicly known as his brothers, sit at table with him who was second to the king. But the reason given for the Egyptians eating apart from them is two-fold: either it was that the Hebrews, being Shemites, were as such identified with the Arab shepherd kings, shortly before expelled; or (2) if this aversion to the

[1] Ch. xliii. 32.

Hebrews was to them as Hebrews, it can only have begun after they had so greatly multiplied as to be a source of uneasiness and of hatred to the Egyptians, who for that reason had brought them into bondage.

III.

This bondage, or "affliction," lasted four hundred years, out of the four hundred and thirty of the sojourning of the children of Israel in Egypt;[1] so that they lived at peace thirty years after their arrival in Goshen. These thirty years may be reckoned to the reign of Apepj or Apepa II.—the last of the Shepherd kings—under whose reign Joseph may have come into Egypt; the beginning of the four hundred years' affliction being made by Ra-seqenen Tau-aa-qan, the last of the Sixteenth Theban Dynasty, who fought and drove the Sasu, also called Menau, or shepherds, from Avaris, and established his court at Memphis.

Joseph was then sixty-nine years old; and though still in honour for his past services, yet probably no longer in power under the new Egyptian Pharaoh. From that time the Israelites were more or less ill-treated, and, as we shall see further on, were drafted as slaves to mines and to the erection of public buildings in various parts of Lower and of Upper Egypt. At any time, therefore, after the accession of Tau-aa-qan to the throne of Memphis, was it true both that "shepherds were an abomination unto the Egyptians," and also "that the Egyptians would not eat with the Hebrews;" and both these statements must have been written before the Exodus, either by Moses or by the writer of the history of Joseph, whose narrative Moses

[1] Gen. xv. 13; Acts vii. 6; Ex. xii. 40; Gal. iii. 17.

may have adopted. The hatred for the shepherds, then, must have been recent, since Pharaoh, to whom Joseph presented his brethren, made them overseers of his own herdsmen—that could not have been an abomination to him; and the eating with Hebrews could not be an abomination to the Egyptians after the Hebrews had left Egypt.

These, and like coincidences, added to the "Egyptianisms" in the Hebrew style of the history of Joseph and of the Exodus, set at rest the ignorant or dishonest assertions of infidels, who would impugn the date and authorship of the Pentateuch; while the clear statement of Scripture, relative to the four hundred years of the Israelites sojourning in Egypt, shows us what to think of the arrogance of such a man as Lepsius, who, with all the weight of his reputation for learning, does not hesitate to allow only one hundred years from the arrival of Jacob into Goshen to the Exodus under Moses.[1] We shall see, however, that the statement of Scripture agrees with the real Egyptian history of those times so far as it has been made out.

After installing Jacob and his sons in the land of Rameses, which is Goshen, Joseph continued his wise government of Egypt, enriching Pharaoh's treasury, and buying for him the greater part of the land in exchange for the corn which he gave to the Egyptians, who thenceforward became, as it were, tenants of Pharaoh's land, with a tribute to him of a fifth of their income from the soil. But the lands of the priests he did not of course lay under tribute; for priests were dependent on Pharaoh, who, according to Egyp-

[1] Königsbuch, Synopt. Taf. 6.

tian custom, attached them to the throne, and courted their influence and power.

Jacob lived seventeen years in Egypt. When, feeling his end drawing near, he sent for Joseph, and bound him by an oath not to bury him—no, not even in Goshen, the best of the land of Egypt, but to carry him out thence to the burying-place of his fathers in Canaan. And Joseph sware unto him, and Israel "bowed himself upon the bed's head" or upon the top of his staff, in gratitude and in worship for the assurance given him ere he died that he should not remain in a strange land, but that he should share, even in death, the last resting-place of Abraham and of Isaac, and there await the fulfilment of the promise.

And by faith in that promise did he bless Joseph's two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, giving the greater blessing to the younger, as if to repeat the choice made in his own case, and to show that God's ways are not as our ways, neither are His thoughts as our thoughts, but that He did choose, and now also chooses, "the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." For when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim it displeased him, and he said to Jacob, "Not so, my father, for this is the first-born; put thy right hand upon his head." But his father refused, and said, "I know it, my son, I know it; he also shall be great, but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations." And he set Ephraim before Manasseh.

He then called his sons around his death-bed, and gave them his last and parting blessing—another fine scene for the pencil of some able artist. The hoary

patriarch, sitting on his bed and leaning on his staff, with his twelve sons around him, listening "to what should befall them in the last days;" eleven of them herdsmen, and one in splendid and foreign attire, singled out by his position and rank, and though lord of the whole assemblage, yet as son hanging on his father's lips, and absorbed in his last words. Egypt and her glory were then little to him; he sat or stood around Jacob's couch not as Pharaoh's prince but as Jacob's beloved son; one with him in heart, in faith and hope, and like him also looking towards that better land, "the land of his fathers"—not his, not theirs yet, but his and theirs by promise—"being fully persuaded that what God had promised He was able also to perform."

Jacob then died in faith, not having received the promises, but "having seen them afar off." "And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him and kissed him. And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel, and forty days—the time it took to embalm—were fulfilled for him; and the Egyptians mourned for him threescore and ten days."[1]

Then, as minister of the realm, Joseph sought leave of Pharaoh to go and bury his father. "My father made me swear," said he, "that I should bury him in the grave he digged for himself in the Land of Canaan."

This may refer either to a niche or additional side cavern Jacob might have hewn out for himself in the cave of Machpelah; or it may also be spoken in pure Egyptian style, and according to the custom of the

[1] Gen. l. 2, 3.

Egyptians, who laid out far more money, and bestowed far greater care and labour on the tombs they hewed out for themselves during their lifetime, and in which their bodies were to rest for thousands of years, until the return of their souls to them—than they did on their houses, which they only called "lodgings" or "inns by the way."

Pharaoh gave Joseph leave to go up. He then left the banks of the Nile and the land of Goshen with a very large company, with chariots and horsemen and the elders of Pharaoh's house and of Egypt, the one as pompous escort to the remains of so great a man as the father of Djaph-nat-panch, and the other as protection and safeguard against any hindrance from either the Hittites or the hordes of Sasus, so lately driven out of Egypt into their sandy deserts of Punt.

A very great difficulty has always been found in tracing the course Joseph and his suite took in order to reach Hebron, on their way to which they mourned for seven days at "the threshing-floor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan." If these words "beyond Jordan" are to be understood of the eastern bank of the river, then Joseph must have gone round the Dead Sea, and through the whole territory of the Arab or Amalekite Sasus, now at enmity with the Egyptians, and the journey must have been both long and hazardous, even with so large an escort as Joseph took with him.

But the difficulty vanishes if, seeing this is the only mention made of this place Atad, and we know not where it was, we take "beyond Jordan," which is always said relatively to the place where either the speaker or the writer was, to mean the western side of Jordan, as in Deut. iii. 25, 27, xi. 30; Num.

xxxiii. 51; Josh. i. 2, etc. This Atad would thus be in Canaan; the Canaanites and "the inhabitants of the land" might then witness that mourning taking place among them, and not at some distance on the other side of the river; and the route then taken and followed by Joseph would be straight from Goshen through the Philistine and Hittite country to the field of Machpelah, near to Hebron. Moses either wrote or revised this narrative on the eastern side of Jordan, or while journeying in the wilderness; and, in either case, "beyond Jordan" would apply to some place in that good land he longed to see beyond or over Jordan, and on the western bank of the river.

IV.

Joseph returned to Egypt with his brethren from burying his father. And when his brethren saw their father was dead, they feared lest Joseph should requite them for all the evil they had done unto him. They therefore sent him a messenger from Goshen to his residence at Memphis, praying him, for his father's sake, to forgive them their trespass against him. He had done so before frankly and fully: he therefore wept when he heard these words; and when his brethren came and fell down before him, and said, "Behold, we be thy servants," Joseph said unto them, "Fear not; ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now, therefore, fear ye not; I will nourish you and your little ones." And he comforted them and spake kindly to them.[1]

Joseph was then fifty-seven years old, "and he

[1] Ch. l. 15, 19.

dwelt in Egypt and lived an hundred and ten years," that is fifty-three years after his father's death. He saw Ephraim's children of the third generation; the children also of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were brought up upon his knees. And when at the point to die, "he by faith made mention of the departing of the children of Israel, and gave commandment concerning his bones,"[1] saying, "God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence."[2]

"So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt."

Thus ended the first outline of the Church among the patriarchs, "who all died in the faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."[3] It was faith in God's promise that made Abraham buy the field of Ephron the Hittite, and the cave of Machpelah, as a pledge of his future possession of that land; that made Isaac also rest there, and Jacob be carried thither from Egypt. And it was also looking forward in faith to Him, in Whom the fathers had hoped, that made Joseph hew for himself no costly resting-place for his body, but give commandment that his bones should be carried out of Egypt to Canaan.

But for this he would have left a tomb that would vie with those of the Amenemhas, Menophres, Eimeis, and other grandees of the Pharaonic times; whereas not a trace of him exists either in painting or sculpture anywhere in the land in which he spent ninety-

[1] Heb. xi. 22. [2] Gen. l. 24, 25. [3] Heb. xi. 13.

three years of his life, and where he was, at the first, the greatest man of his day. This may be partly owing to the troublous times in which he found himself in Egypt; as he must have witnessed the downfall of the Sasu, Hyksos or shepherd dynasty, and lived, though not in power perhaps, under three or four Pharaohs of the Sixteenth and of the Seventeeth Theban dynasties, until the reign of Taaud-mes or Thothmes I. But also his heart was not in Egypt; he was at best a stranger there; his thoughts, his faith, his hopes turned to the Promised land; he should not be buried in Egypt; no tomb should hold him there. In Canaan would he rest.

V.

Thus closes the first period of the Jewish Church, that "of the righteousness which is by faith,"—of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph; the roots as it were of the stem—the commonwealth of Israel, that bears us the branches. They lived and died in faith, as the Holy Apostle tells us, long ere the law was given; for there could be no law where there was no people; but with individuals there might be, as indeed there were, promises and a covenant.

Thus in Abraham we not only have a pattern for believers, but a figure of the Church of Christ chosen, called out of the world, and walking, by faith in certain promises, towards those same promises; being righteous of an imputed righteousness, which consisted in accounting Him that promised faithful, in believing Him even against hope, and in proving this faith and hope by deeds. Only then did Abraham receive the circumcision, a seal of that righteousness by faith,

and of God's covenant with him, a sacrament—a rite that placed in covenant with God all those who shared in it from their birth, and was to them a pledge on His part that He gave them right to the promises made to His people. These promises were figured or foreshadowed in the sacrifices Abraham was taught to offer, not only in remembrance of the first sacrifice instituted of God after His promise of the great offering of "the Lamb without blemish and without spot—that taketh away the sins of the world," but as means whereby Abraham renewed, as by sacrament, his covenant with God; as sacrifices that all centred in that of Isaac. This was the great sacrament of Abraham's life; the great triumph of his faith; the act of obedience that made him the friend of God.

In that son, Isaac, we have the shadow of the Son beloved of His Father, not only when carrying the wood upon which He was to be stretched on the altar, but also as the Husband of one wife, of His Spouse the Church, the mother both of those who sell their birthright to God's promises for a mess of this world's pursuits and pleasures—the many; and of those—the few who, by faith in those promises, first secure them as their portion, walk towards them. These allow themselves to be led, guided, and also protected by the angels sent to minister unto them, as they did unto Jacob, who, having chosen the promises, had nevertheless to lie on the ground and to cross the river with his staff only. But as it was in faith and obedience, he also received of this world's goods, as a reward for it, and was made to re-cross that same stream at the head of two bands, and lord of very much wealth.

In him we have the founder of the twelve tribes

of Israel, the figure of the Church of Christ, both Jewish and Gentile, founded on the Apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone; of the twelve foundations and of the twelve gates of the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the Mother of us all.

And in Joseph we see the distinct outline of Him Who was betrayed and sold by His brethren into the hands of the Gentiles; Who was tempted, falsely accused and unjustly condemned, cast into prison, and Who, on the third day of His imprisonment, was suddenly raised to great glory, to save life by a great deliverance; and before Whom, as prince and ruler, His own brethren will come to present themselves for food, for support, and for pardon at His hands.

Such figures are too plain to be mistaken; too touching ever to be forgotten. They were only shadows of good things to come; but shadows in whose outline there is such a unity of design that there we read and see "one body, one spirit, one hope of the same calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is above all and through all, and in us all,"[1] being, as they and we all are, "complete in Him, in Whom the promises of God are yea, and in Him amen."[2]

[1] Eph. iv. 4, 5, 6. [2] 2 Cor. i. 20.

BOOK II.

THE CHURCH IN THE WILDERNESS.

CHAPTER I.

ISRAEL IN EGYPT.

I.

JOSEPH was dead, "and there arose a new king over Egypt, which knew him not." This new king may have been Taaud-mes or Thothmès II., from whose accession to the throne of the Pharaohs probably began "the service with rigour" of the Israelites, who, the more they were afflicted the more they multiplied and grew, until "the Egyptians were grieved because of them," and this new king, who had not known Joseph, led his people to oppress and ill-treat them. They set taskmasters over them, "who made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field." And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Rameses.

This is all the information that Scripture gives us

relative to the two hundred and ninety-seven years of the sojourn of the children of Israel in Egypt, from the death of Joseph to the birth of Moses. No event of any importance, and bearing on the history of the Israelites, happened during that time, otherwise it would have been left on record; they were only multiplying into a people subject to the slavery foretold to Abraham, being thus prepared for their wonderful deliverance from grinding servitude, and for their significant exodus from the land of bondage. But if Scripture is silent, the monuments of Egypt and scraps of her delicate papyri strangely rescued from destruction, throw some additional light on the existence of the Israelites during that period, and bear witness to the truth of the statement made in Holy Writ.

Of Thothmes I. it is recorded that he carried on wars from Ethiopia to Assyria, on which account probably he oppressed the children of Israel and reduced them to servitude, lest it came to pass that when there fell war—with the Amalekite Sasus, who had attempted another invasion of Lower Egypt, or with the restless and warlike Hittites, their neighbours—the Israelites also joined those enemies of Egypt in fighting against the Egyptians, and so escape from the country. No monument with which I am acquainted connects Thothmes I. with the Israelites, nor yet Thothmes II., who was a more peaceful sovereign than his father. But on the walls of a chapel at Abd-el-Gurna, at Thebes, there is a remarkable painting of the reign of Thothmes III., wherein are represented men, among whom are evidently Shemites, digging the clay and making bricks, with Egyptian taskmasters, rod in hand, sitting by them and overlooking them,

with this inscription in hieroglyphics, *Haqt-u en hontph er katou neter-ha en atepeph Amen*, "captives brought by his majesty (Thothmes III.) for the buildings of the temple of his father Amun." There is nothing to prevent these Shemites working at Thebes from being portraits of Israelite bondmen of that time; for we find in other documents of the reign of Seti II., subsequent to the Exodus, that some Aperi-u, or Hebrews, were still working in mines of Upper Egypt; that seems to show, not only that some few of them might have been left behind, but also that they were drafted as slaves into various parts of the kingdom.

II.

But the words "there arose a new king, who knew not Joseph"[1] might also be said, not of the Pharaoh that came next after Joseph's death, but of any of the succeeding sovereigns. Thus it may apply, as it probably does, to Ramses II., or Sesostris, under whose reign Moses spent the early part of his life; and who, we know, not only from Greek historians, but more especially from papyri still in existence, was, like his ancestors, wont to employ captives for the building of cities or of public edifices.

Thus we are told that the Israelites "built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses." The first of these, Pithom, is said to be alluded to as Pachtum,[2] and occupied by the Sasus, whom Seti I., father of Ramses I., fought and overcame, in his conquests of several parts of Kanana, or Canaan, and in his wars

[1] Exod. i. 8.

[2] This is Brugsch's opinion, but it is erroneous. That great scholar is not sufficiently careful—if not altogether careless—in comparing

with the Hittites; and both Pithom and Raamses were already built in the days of that Pharaoh, but they were restored and fortified by Ramses II. We learn from a celebrated inscription, dated the fifth year of the reign of Ramses II., that he met the Hittite chief Chetasar in the city of Pe-Ramessou or Rameses, situated, like Pithom, in the land of Goshen. Most of these buildings were made of brick, as Scripture tells us, and as we also learn from a scrap of papyrus,[1] unfortunately much injured, wherein we nevertheless read that—

"As regards the works for the building, twelve of the men, whose task is to mould bricks out of the heap of clay, and who were brought hither for the works of the house, were careless to fulfil their tale of bricks day by day. Let no one then be idle in the building of this new house. In obedience to my lord's commands."[2]

Such a passage as this unexpectedly casts a brilliant light, though, as it were, from the dead, on the labours of the Israelites in Egypt, especially when read side by side with the representation of the same labours in the painting of Thothmes III. already mentioned.

Egyptian with Hebrew etymologies. No man who pays the slightest attention to both could, as Brugsch does, pretend that *Moses*, Heb. and Egypt. *Mo-she*, can possibly come from the Egyptian *mes;* neither can *Ra-mes* be made into *Ramesses* or *Raamses;* still less *Pa-khtum* into *Pi-thom*. But the Hebrew historian gives exactly the Egyptian sounds and letters; so that the mistake does not lie with him.

[1] Anastasi, no. iii. p. 3, verso.

[2] Chabas, Mél. Egypt. 2de sér. p. 123; Brugsch, Hist. Eg. p. 174. I think it right to warn my readers that these extracts from papyri, and those already mentioned in the history of Joseph, are, against my custom, given at second-hand from translations, though by two of the safest and most trustworthy of Egyptian scholars, the Vte. de Rougé and M.

The same papyrus[1] gives a glowing description of Pe-Ramessou, the city of Ramses, or Rameses, written by the scribe Pembesa on the occasion of a visit of Ramses II. to this his favourite city. It runs thus:—

"I came to Pe-Ramses Mei-Amun (Ramesses). I found it in perfect order. The spot is . . . beautiful, beautiful! There is nothing to be compared to it among the buildings of Thebes, . . . the mysterious abode of the delights of life. The fields around it abound in exquisite spots, that yield abundantly all manner of fruit day by day; the fish ponds thereof are full of fish, the tanks of ducks; the meadows are covered with luxuriant herbage, and the arbours are hung with garlands of flowers. The gardens distil honey; it is a moist, well-watered meadow. The storehouses are full of corn, heaped up to the skies; the kitchen gardens are full of vegetables and of seeds; and the greenhouses of abu flowers. Lemons, limes, oranges, and figs in the fruit gardens; abundance of sweet wine of Kakem, that is drunk with honey. In the river red fish and lotuses, with other fish of the river Har, and other choice fish of the Euphrates; and fish . . . from the canals . . . are there brought as offering to the greatest of conquerors (Ramses II.); there is also the tank of salt water, and the natron

Chabas. To unimpeachable honesty, and to a sagacity peculiar to them, they add a profound knowledge of Egyptian lore, and never venture into rash and fanciful theories; but always tread warily the ground in which they have made a way for others to follow. A translation of their translation is therefore sufficient for an Outline of this kind, intended for general readers; were this work of a different kind, I would not give the rendering of those MSS. without first ascertaining it for myself.

[1] Anastasi, no. iii. p. 1, l. 12, to p. 3, l. 9.

lake; and the boats of the city come and go day by day, laden with produce for the inhabitants thereof. There joy and pleasure reign; privations are unknown, and the little and great among the people are all alike.

"Come, let us celebrate festivals in honour of him (Ramses II.), as well as the beginnings of seasons. Offer him the Tufi and the Menh, the pond of Harphra with branches, bunches of fruit from the orchard, and wreaths of flowers from the garden. Let the fowler come with fowls of a thousand kinds. The sea serves him by giving him the atu and the beka fish; and distant regions send him their tribute. The vassals of (Ramses) the greatest of conquerors come every day gaily dressed, carrying on their heads the sweet drink bak in new skins. They stand at the gates, waving in their hands bunches of flowers and branches of Pa-Athor, wreaths of Petor, on the day of the appearance of Ramses II. Mont on earth, on the morning of the feast of Kahika. They all vie one with another in doing him homage. Give sweet draughts to the chief of conquerors;—the tebi, the khuawa drink, that tastes like the fruit annu preserved in honey; the haq of kati, brought from the harbour; the wine from the vineyards; delicious drinks from the river Sakab. Wreaths of flowers to the fair attendants on the greatest of conquerors, who comes in at the gate of Memphis; let pleasure ever live there, without let or hindrance. Ra-nter-ma-sotep-en-Ra, thou God Mont upon earth, Ramsesu mei-Amun; long live thou in health and power, thou who art God."[1]

This florid description of the treasure city, Raamses,

[1] Chabas, Mél. Égypt. 2de série, p. 132.

agrees entirely with the words of Scripture, that Joseph placed Jacob "in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses," which was the land of Goshen, well watered by the canal that connected the Nile with the lake Timsah, a lagune of salt water, full of crocodiles, as the name thereof implies, and originally a part of the Red Sea. There are other passages from the same papyri that show the city of Rameses to have been well watered, and abundantly supplied with all the produce of Egypt, which I pass over, in order to mention one still more interesting, wherein the Hebrews (Aperi-u) are mentioned as drawing stone for the building of the palace of Ramses II., at Rameses. It is a letter from the scribe Kawisar to Bek-en-Ptah, and is found in the hieratic papyri of Leyden. It runs thus:—

"In fact I have obeyed my lord's order, saying: Give corn to the militia men (or soldiers) as well as to the Aperi-u (Hebrews), who are (occupied) in drawing stone for the palace of the (house) city of Ramses mei-Amun, to whom be life, health, and strength; lover of truth; and who are given over in charge to Amen-em-an, captain of the Matjau. I have given them their corn every month, according to the good intentions told me by my lord."[1]

We see from this letter that Matjau soldiers, a foreign race conquered by the Egyptians at the beginning of the Twelfth Dynasty, were set over the Israelite workmen, in order to quell any attempt at rebellion; and that they were rationed like them every month. That letter of Kawisar to Bek-en-Ptah forms part of a narrative in connection with other subjects; but here

[1] Chabas, Mél. Égypt. ibid. p. 144.

is another from the scribe Keniamen, also found in the Leyden papyri, but which, ending as it does with "*nfr snbk*"—good health to thee, farewell,—may have been written while the Israelites were actually at work, and is on this account a document of the highest interest. After stating the preamble in honour of Ramses II., Keniamen says:—

"The scribe Keniamen (writes) in order to satisfy his master the Katjena Hui, one of the overseers of Ramses mei-Amun's household. This is sent to inform my master, also to satisfy him; I have obeyed what my master commanded me, saying: Take care of the men who are with thee. I am not to blame by my master.

"Other matter. My master's horses are all well. I give them their corn every day.

"Other matter. I have obeyed my master's orders, saying: Give corn to the militia men as well as to the Aperi-u (Hebrews), who draw stone for the temple of the Sun, Ramses mei-Amun, to the south of Memphis. Farewell."

In the second part of the papyrus Anastasi,[1] we find a somewhat poetical description of the Bekhen of Ramses II., which is said to have been "between the Tsaha land—probably Palestine—and Egypt, thus bordering towards the east on Pa-Amun; towards the south on Pa-Sutech; towards the north on Nati, and towards the east on Astarte. It was like An (On) and Memphis for delights and for the joys of life. People leave their own countries to come and reside there. It abounds in all manner of rich produce, and of delicious fruit. There resides Ramsesu mei-Amun,

[1] Anast. ii. pt. 1, l. 1.

beloved of Tum, the delight of Egypt," etc. The term "bekhen," royal residence, seems to be here applied in a wider sense to the whole "land of Rameses," which is Goshen,[1] the descriptions of which, from these Egyptian sources, confirm in every way what the Bible says of it, that it was "the best of the land" of Egypt.

III.

As regards the other treasure-city (Pithom), mentioned together with Rameses, our information is more scanty. In papyrus Anastasi vi.[2] mention is made of certain chiefs of the Sasus, who had requested to be allowed to bring their cattle into the farm or territory of Mei-en-phtah Hotephima, in order to keep them alive;—the same reason as that given by Joseph's brethren to Pharaoh[3]—and they were brought to the fish-ponds of Pei-tum of Mei-en-phtah Hotephima, the son of Ramses II., and probably the Pharaoh before whom Moses wrought all his wonders, and who perished in the Red Sea.

However little we may be able to determine exactly the situation of Pithom, or Pei-tum, we can but agree with M. Chabas[4] in thinking that Moses never could have transcribed the Egyptian "Pa-khtum," a fort or fortress, by "Pithom;" so that Brugsch's opinion, of which mention was made above, as to the identity of Pithom with Pakhtum-en-zara, does not appear sound on etymological grounds; still less may we take either

[1] It is also in favour of the etymology for "Goshen," mentioned above, p. 205, namely *kah-shen*, and, with a dialectic variation common even in those days, *ga-shen* or *go-shen*, "the land of gardens." But this, like the rest, is a mere surmise. We know nothing certain about it.

[2] Pl. iv. l. 13. [3] Gen. xlvii. 4. [4] Mél. Ég. 2de série, p. 159, *seq.*

one or other of the "khtams" or "shtams," forts, on the frontier, for Pithom; and least of all Pa-tum, the name often given to An (On) as city of Tum, the sun of the nether world.

Lastly, the Aperi-u (Hebrews) are named on an inscription found at Hammāmāt, on the road from Coptos to the Red Sea, as making part of a colony of 9000 men sent into the desert by Ramses IV. to work the mines. The Aperi-u, says M. Chabas,[1] were 800 in number in that colony, to which 200 fishermen were attached for the support of the miners. From this it would appear that all the Israelites did not leave Egypt with Moses; some of them being, as we see, sent into the interior of the country to work either as captives or as slaves.

Witnesses like these to the truth of Scripture, gleams of light thus glinting on the darkest page of the history of the people of God from a most unexpected quarter, from fragments of papyri accidentally rescued from utter destruction—are testimonies more valuable than direct statements wherein there might have been collusion. The Hebrews were not likely to be mentioned in Egyptian documents otherwise than as captives or slaves "serving with rigour," and accordingly they are so mentioned as to let us into their daily work, giving their tale of bricks to their overseers, or drawing stone for public buildings, in various parts of Egypt. And although it is impossible to fix with certainty any date in this time,[2] we must nevertheless notice that the greatest light we receive from

[1] Mél. Égypt. 1re série, p. 53.

[2] It is right and in the interest of truth to say that all dates of the Exodus, and, therefore, of other events relative to it, are at best sur-

Egyptian monuments on the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt, centres on the times of Ramses II. (also called by Greek writers Sesoosis or Sesostris), at the beginning of whose reign Moses probably was either born, or, at least, a very young child, and from before whom he fled into Midian; while we see that all the Egyptian descriptions we have "of the land of Rameses," also agree with what we are told of it in Scripture.

We naturally wish for greater light and for further proofs and details from Egyptian sources, and more may possibly be granted when further discoveries are made. Yet it should be enough that every witness, one after another, unconsciously bears testimony to

mises, ranging within four or five hundred years, and put forth with more or less learning or ignorance, assumption or recklessness, from Lepsius, who brings Abraham into Egypt B.C. 1514, Jacob B.C. 1414, and the Exodus B.C. 1314, all admirably made to fit, by compressing the 430 years' residence in Egypt into exactly one century! (Königsb. Taf. p. 6)—down to another writer, who, after a succession of "ifs" and "ands," lands us "on the hypothesis that Thothmes II. is the delinquent Pharaoh," and is loud in praises of "the British Muse of History," whose best friends can only wish she had never made herself so ridiculous by her pretended scholarship. All such writers may do well to notice the following moderate statement of the accurate, profound, and honest Egyptian scholar, the Vte. de Rougé:—"As we have already said, the synchronism of Moses with Ramses II. (xix. dyn.), so valuable as regards history, gives us but a glimmer of light, of hardly any avail for chronology, because the period of the Judges of Israel is not yet well ascertained. Setj I., however, may probably be put somewhere about B.C. 1500, and the beginning of the eighteenth dynasty about the beginning of the eighteenth century B.C. Nevertheless, it is very possible that an error of two hundred years may exist even in this reckoning, owing to the defective witness of history, and to the incomplete records left us on existing monuments." ('Notices Sommaires, Avant-propos, Chronologie,' p. 22.) Real knowledge of the subject can say no more.

the accuracy of the Inspired Records, and shows that he who wrote the account of the Israelites in Egypt must have lived there, must have been well acquainted with the language, the ways and customs of her people, and must have written his narrative within a very short time after the events stated in it had taken place.

CHAPTER II.

MOSES.

I.

THE affliction of the children of Israel had already lasted more than three hundred years, and God was preparing for them a deliverer, who should rescue them from their bondage at the appointed time, and constitute them God's people under his rule—who should be the founder of the Commonwealth of Israel, a lawgiver, a prophet like unto whom "the Prophet Priest, and King" was to be given,—and who should himself be the friend of God.

The edict had gone forth—probably from the mouth of Seti I., the father of Ramses II.,—that in order to keep under and to decimate the rapid growth of the dreaded Hebrew race, every son thereof should be cast into the river, as food for the crocodiles that swarmed therein—when Amram, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi (of the third generation since Levi's arrival in Egypt), took to himself his father's sister Jochebed to wife, of whom a son was born after the king's

edict. "By faith," says the holy Apostle, "was he then hidden three months of his parents." But, finding that he could no longer be hidden, his mother "took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein, and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink,"—and committed it to the safe-keeping of Him who had taught her "he was a proper child," for whose sake she might brave the king's commandment. The mother could not stand by to see it carried away by the stream for ever beyond her reach; but Miriam, with a sister's affection and with childish curiosity, "stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him."

She did not wait long: for the deliverer was ordered, and was coming. "The daughter of Pharaoh came down—the river was then deep in its bed, for it was winter in the months Choiak or Tybi—to wash herself at the river,—it would be ten in the morning at that season of the year,—and her maidens walked along by the river-side; and when she saw the ark among the flags she sent her maid to fetch it. And when she had opened it she saw the child; and behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said: This is one of the Hebrews' children."

This was Miriam's opportunity. She saw the expression of compassion on the countenance of the princess, and heard her say, with a smile of pity: It is one of the Hebrews' children. She then came forward and asked her; "Shall I go and fetch a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?"

The princess having taken up the child was as princess pledged to care for it, and as a woman she

could not, despite her father's orders, once more commit the crying babe to the wild eddies of the stream. So then, following her womanly instincts, the princess, as an unconscious instrument in God's hands, said to Miriam: "Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother," who was neither long a-coming nor slow at bowing obedience to the king's daughter when she said to her: "Take this child away and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages." And she took it, and nursed it—we may think with what feelings of gratitude for such a reward of her faith.

"And the child grew and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses, and she said: Because I drew him out of the water."[1]

Few names have tried the ingenuity and learning of scholars, whether Jewish or Gentile, more than this name—Moses. For a length of time, and even now, the false interpretation of it given by Josephus—*mō* or *mōü* "water," and *ses* or *üses* "saved by,"—was, and is yet, received as sufficient; while many of the moderns have insisted on the name *Mōshe*, the Hebrew for *Moses*—being Hebrew and not Egyptian; and as such, not meaning, of course, "drawn out of," but "drawing out of," said prophetically of Moses as "drawing" the children of Israel out of Egypt. Among the Rabbis, Abarbanel points out with much truth that the Hebrew term rendered "I drew him out" is not the first pers. pret. as generally thought, but the second pers. fem. pret., whereby the person speaking is Jochebed and not the princess, thus: And she (Jochebed) called his name *Moshe*, and she (Joche-

[1] The Authorized Version of Exod. ii. 10.

bed) said: Because thou, Pharaoh's daughter, didst draw him out of the water." He is so far correct that, unless we allow the omission of a *yod* in the Hebrew word, the verse cannot be rendered otherwise than as Abarbanel does,—though he does not explain the meaning of *Moshe* in Hebrew. If, however, we wish to retain the verse as it stands in the Authorized Version, we must look upon the Hebrew term rendered "I drew him out" as incorrectly written.

Yet we must bear in mind the following probable facts, that (1) the princess and Moses's mother spoke, of course, in Egyptian; that (2) Moses, when he wrote this account of his birth, which he heard perhaps from his mother's lips, translated and wrote in Hebrew the Egyptian words then spoken, except the proper name *Moshe*, which, like all proper names, he did not translate, but only transcribed, and as accurately as Rameses, Pithom, Piahiroth, Migdol, etc., every one of which is accurately rendered in Hebrew letters. We must therefore (3) take *Moshe* to be Egyptian; and in Egyptian, according to the special grammatical rules applicable to *si* or *se*,—in Memphitic *she* for *sheri*, son, —that may be placed either before or after the noun it governs, *Mo-she* means "water-son," that is "water-born."[1] As the Hebrew text, therefore, at present stands, Jochebed did give her son the Egyptian name *Moshe*, in honour of his having been drawn out of the water by Pharaoh's daughter.

This princess has been variously called Bithiah after 1 Chron. iv. 18; Seiran by Arab writers, and Thermu-

[1] *Mō* or *muau*, "water," and *she*, "son;" "water-born" being literally, *mō-mes* or *mō-messou*, as *Ra-mes*, *Raa-mses* or *Ra-messou* is "sun-born;" *Aah-mes*, "moon-born," *Taaud-mes*, born of Thoth, etc.

this by Josephus. But none of these names in the least agrees with any of the seven daughters of Ramses II., whose names are left on record on existing monuments. Indeed, when Brugsch says that Moses was born about the fifth year of the reign of Ramses II., he seems to forget that Ramses II., who is said in an inscription of his time[1] to have been a mere child when he first took in hand the reins of government, might not have been more than sixteen or twenty years of age on the fifth year of his reign,—much too young to have a daughter going to the river with her attendants to bathe. On the other hand Seti I., Ramses II.'s father, had no daughter whose name, at least, has been handed down to us; so that, if this were a daughter of Ramses II., whose reign lasted sixty-six years, the reign of Mei-en-ephtah Hotephamen, his son, must be shortened by several years, and the Exodus, said to have happened on the twentieth year of his reign, must have happened earlier.

But the truth is, that we can lay our finger on no precise date; we have light enough, apart from that of Scripture, to show that it must all be true, and that it must have happened about that time; but as to the precise year or date within a number of years, we know it not. We are thus obliged to take the only position that befits us as Christians—when we are made to fall back upon the letter of Scripture, and to admit that after all we have as yet no safer guide than that, even in these matters of history.

II.

It were entirely foreign to my purpose to dwell on

[1] Stèle de Kouban, l. 3.

the various stories respecting Moses, to which his fame gave rise both in the Jewish and in the Gentile world, as they form no part of the object I have in view. He is a sufficiently wonderful character in himself to stand alone, and in his own garb, without the help of others.—He may then have lived at the court of Ramses II., in company with the king's many sons, not, like them, given to hunting and to the luxury of an Egyptian life at the palace, but perfecting himself in the wisdom and learning of the Egyptians, mastering not merely their sacred writings, but also the philosophy which, years after, wise men from abroad came to admire and study.

No doubt Moses was well known at the "college, the house of life," among the doctors of hidden things, among the hierogrammates, the prophets and priests that ate and drank at the king's table, and that swayed his mind alternately with the lore of Tum, the worship of Amun, the dread of Sutech, or the wiles of Astarte. For, besides their wisdom and their learning, Moses was himself "mighty in words" more telling, "and in deeds" greater than theirs, wise as he was of a better wisdom. So that none of these things lured him; neither the luxurious splendour of an effeminate court, nor the wealth and ease of his rank as adopted son of the king's daughter, nor yet the influence that rank gave him. But, by faith, he, "when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ"—even then—"greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." His

heart, therefore, was not in Egypt, but to the other good land promised to Abraham and to his children,—to his own land, then, in faith and hope.

But, how to wring his brethren from under the galling yoke that made them groan? His own arm might be too weak for the task, yet he would help them if he could. When he was grown therefore, and "full forty years old,[1] it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel, and seeing one that suffered wrong he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: for he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God, by his hand, would deliver them; but they understood not." "And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow? And he said: Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared and said: Surely this thing is known."

According to the Egyptian laws, preserved by Greek writers,[2] Moses was justified in defending the oppressed, and slaying the oppressor. Nevertheless, such an act in favour of a Hebrew and against an Egyptian, from an inmate of the palace, from the reputed son of the king's daughter, was enough to rouse the king's wrath; therefore "when he heard of this thing sought he to slay Moses." He had been worried by endless wars with his troublesome neighbours the Chetas, whose king Chetasar he had just bound to keep the peace by treaty made at Rameses; and he was still harassed from other quarters, and constantly in fear lest the

[1] Exod. ii. 11; Acts vii. 23. [2] Diod. Sic. lib. i. c. 77.

Hebrews should make common cause with some of his enemies against him; no hope of redress or of relief from their degraded state should then be given them, thought the Egyptian autocrat.

Yet, only because the hour of the deliverance was not yet come, because the years of affliction were not yet completed. But the forty that still remained to fill the cup of Israel's sorrow and of Egypt's injustice, were to be spent by Moses away from Egypt, in Midian, whither he fled from the face of Pharaoh. He crossed the "tank of Punt," the present Gulf of Suez, where the god Tesem and other foes of Egypt were wont to perish; and then by the quarries worked in days of yore under King Pepj, to the awful solitudes of Sinai and to the land of Midian, where, among a kindred people, sworn enemies of Egypt, he felt more secure against the pursuit of Ramses, than he would have been among the Chetas who were now at peace with him.

So thought Moses, perhaps; but God's intention was otherwise. He sent him thither to the future scene of the last forty years of his life, there to forget amid the solemn grandeur of that stern scenery, the soft impressions of the plains and of the gardens of Egypt, and to prepare himself, as S. Paul also did long after, for the last and most wearing struggle of his life. There Moses, erst at the court of Pharaoh, but now a shepherd, learnt in solitude with God the hard lesson to deny himself and as His servant to make ready for his long sufferings with His people.

Many a time, while tending his sheep alone, and dwelling on the past, on his splendour at court and on the sorrows and affliction of his brethren, and looking

into the future to the fulfilment of the promise, did he hear a still small voice, saying, My grace is sufficient for thee; I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, the faithful God; be of good courage. Many a time would his thoughts flit back to his father's house, to the banks of the River whence he was rescued, to the brick-kiln, to the stubble-field, where he heard groans of misery and cries for pity from those he longed to deliver from the thraldom of their oppressors.

See him leaning upon his staff on the slope of one of the desert hills over against the mountain of God, looking at those bold and rugged heights, above which in the deep blue sky, soar in concentric spires a pair of black and white vultures, scanning the flock around him and marking the one sheep they will bring at even to their young; see the earnest look and watchful eye of that shepherd of God's people over the few sheep of his pasture.

What a contrast for him, from the painted halls and lotus-pillars of Pharaoh's palace, from the sublime and most luxurious abode of man, to these yet grander halls of nature, to mountain passes among these dwellings of God, founded, reared, established, and adorned by Him! And when the shadows of eve lengthened, and the beams of the setting sun he was wont to see streaming in rays of gold over the fields of Memphis and in a flood of sparkling light on the eddies of the stream, detached at last in bright red the bluff sides of Sinai and of Horeb against a purple-grey sky, and he brought home his flock and folded it for the night among the palms growing around the tent of Jethro, the patriarch and priest of Midian—not Zipporah's

smiles, not Gershom's playful caresses and delight at seeing him, nor yet, perhaps, even the friendship of Eliphaz the Temanite, or of some one akin to him, could make the shepherd Moses forget "he was a stranger in a strange land," away from the afflicted people he loved to remember, and earnestly yearned to set free from their crushing bondage.

III.

Time wore on. The Pharaoh who had sought to slay Moses was dead, and the day of deliverance was at hand. Then did the Lord appear unto Moses as he was feeding Jethro's flock by Horeb, the mountain of God. He called to him from the midst of the burning bush and said, Moses, Moses; and the Lord's servant answered: Here am I.

"And the Lord said: Draw not nigh hither, put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob; I have seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large; unto a land flowing with milk and honey. Come now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt."

And the shepherd answered, "Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?"

And the Lord said, "Certainly I will be with thee"—who, then, can be against thee? My strength shall be made perfect in thy weakness. Fear not, I will be thy helper.

"And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come to the children of Israel, and tell them the God of their fathers has sent me, they will ask me, What is His name?" for they have forgotten Him—what shall I then say unto them?

Tell the children of Israel, said God: "I AM hath sent me unto you." He is the God of your fathers, the Eternal One; Who hath appeared unto me, and told me He would deliver you from your affliction, and bring you unto the good land which He promised your fathers to give them.

But, said Moses, "they will not hearken unto me, nor believe my word when I tell them Thou hast appeared unto me."

"And the Lord said unto him, What is in thine hand? And he said a rod. And the Lord said, Cast it on the ground; and it became a serpent; and Moses fled before it. And the Lord said unto him, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand and caught it; and it became a rod in his hand—that they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers hath appeared unto thee. Go, thou shalt work this and other signs also, so that if they believe not the first they may believe the second and the third sign."

"But, O Lord, I am not eloquent; I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue;" how shall I speak to them who look only for the wisdom of words, who worship gods of their own making, in whose mouths they put only the words they wish to hear? They will laugh me to scorn, and tell me I am no speaker.

And the Lord said unto him: "Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or

the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the Lord? Now, therefore, go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say."

O Lord, I pray thee send some one else; I am not fit to carry thy message to the king of Egypt and to his people.—"Go, Aaron the Levite, thy brother, is coming to meet thee; thou shalt put words in his mouth, he shall be thy spokesman, and I will teach you what ye shall do. And take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs." The king himself shall sue for mercy at thy hands, and at the wave of thy rod all Egypt shall tremble. "I am the Lord."

The message was given, the credentials were sealed, and the shepherd of Horeb was now fraught with a power that would blight the land, cleave the waters of the sea, and rend asunder the rock of flint with a might that nothing could stay. It was the power of the word given him to speak. "My word," saith the Lord, "that goeth forth out of My mouth, shall not return unto Me void, but shall accomplish that which I please, and prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it."[1] It is the word He gave His Apostles; it is the word He gives His servants who, like Moses, answer, Here am I, when called and sent on His errand and their own.

So Moses went back to take leave of his father-in-law, on his return to Egypt. He left his flock and he bade farewell to the palm-trees and to the rugged rocks of the desert, taking with him his wife and his two sons, and the staff with which he tended his sheep, and which henceforth would be in his hand the sceptre of God's kingdom on earth.

[1] Is. lv. 11.

Here Aaron met him, led thither by God; and they both came to Egypt and gathered together the elders of Israel, who, "when they heard that the Lord had visited them and had looked upon their affliction, believed, bowed their heads, and worshipped."

The night was far spent, and the day of deliverance already dawned in the far east. The four hundred years of affliction were at an end; and Egypt was now to be judged, laid waste, and doomed, until Israel, the people of God, was rescued from her grasp with a high hand and a stretched-out arm.

CHAPTER III.

MOSES AND AARON BEFORE PHARAOH.

I.

"AFTERWARD Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh:[1] Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let My people go, that they may hold a feast unto Me in the wilderness."[2]

See these two Hebrews, plain men, the one with his shepherd's staff in his hand, the other in the garb of the despised Aperi-u, standing boldly before the beloved of Ptah, who sat upon his throne under the glittering canopy of his regal hall, surrounded by his court, and at whose look alone his subjects trembled before

[1] Whom, for convenience' sake, we will call Mei-en-ptah (Mei-en-ptah-hotph-her-maa), according to Brugsch's chronology (Hist. d'Ég., p. 172, *seq.*), though Lepsius place the Exodus under Sethos II., son and successor of Mei-en-ptah; but it is a point I will not attempt to decide. We may, however, notice that according to the present state of knowledge of Egyptian history Mei-en-ptah had a son, whom he lost early in his reign, and was succeeded by Seti Mei-en-ptah, or Sethos II., another son of his. Which son, then, did he lose by the hand of the destroying angel, if so be he was the Pharaoh of the Exodus? Seti or Sethos II., however, left no son.

[2] Ex. v. 1.

him. See the feelings of conscious authority, and of resistless power shown in the short, calm, but peremptory message brought to the king, and the sneer of contempt and astonishment with which he receives it: "Who is the Lord, that I, Pharaoh, should obey His voice to let Israel go?" My father died at peace with Chetasar, king of the Chetas, son of Marusar, son of Sapalulu; and the Hebrews have no Lord but me. "I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go. Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works? get you unto your burdens." Go ye, and work as well as they.

"And thou, Seti-mei-en-Ptah, give orders to Pet-Asra, Sotp-en-Amun, Bek-en-Ptah, and other officers, that they command the taskmasters to give those Hebrews no more straw for the bricks; to tell them to find it for themselves, and to give the same tale of bricks as heretofore. By Ptah, as I am Pharaoh, they shall be made to feel my hand."

"So the people were scattered abroad throughout the land of Egypt to gather stubble instead of straw, and the officers of the children of Israel cried unto Pharaoh. But he said, Ye are idle, ye are idle; therefore ye say, Let us go and sacrifice to the Lord. Go, therefore, now, and work, for there shall no straw be given you, yet ye shall deliver the tale of bricks."[1]

Then the officers of the children of Israel saw they were in an evil case; and they met Moses and Aaron, who stood in the way as they came forth from Pharaoh, and greeted them with, "The Lord look upon you and judge, for ye have put a sword into the hands of Pharaoh's servants to slay us." The trials of Moses

[1] Ex. v. 17.

with his people began thus early; happily, "he was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth."[1]

He then "returned unto the Lord" and communed with Him; "and the Lord said unto him, Now shalt thou see what I will do unto Pharaoh."

Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am Jehovah. "I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob by the name of God Almighty—El-Shaddaï—but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them. I have heard the groaning of the children of Israel, and I have remembered My covenant. Wherefore say unto them: "I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm and with great judgments. And I will take you for a people, and I will be to you a God; and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, Which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians; and I will bring you unto a land, concerning which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I am the Lord."

There was God's people—"six hundred thousand men beside women and children" that left Egypt a few weeks later[2]; but during four hundred years of affliction and of servitude, they had forgotten even His Name; they had become indifferent to His covenant with them; and as to the promised "land flowing with milk and honey," all hope of it had died away among them. Some few might speak of it among themselves, and rehearse the traditions handed

[1] Numb. xii. 3. [2] Ex. xii. 37.

down from Abraham to them: but how many among them remembered the promise made to their ancestor, that after they had been afflicted four hundred years in Egypt, they should come out thence with judgment upon their oppressors? Did many among them reckon the time, and thus cheer their daily toil by the hope of a speedy rescue? Not many, since they murmured against God and against Moses, ere they left Egypt, wishing rather to continue there as slaves than to open their eyes and see the deliverance wrought for them by the Lord.

Nevertheless, they were God's people; the children of Abraham, and heirs of the promise, degraded, enslaved though they might be. The covenant made with them was standing, though unknown to them, but known to Him Who had made it, and Who was now about to fulfil His promise to make them His people and to be their God; thus ratifying with them the covenant made for them with their fathers. Yet ere they could be His they must be rescued, redeemed, delivered from the thraldom of their Egyptian masters. They were themselves helpless and hopeless. But the hour was at hand when He would save them and judge the nation they had served. "And Moses went and spake so unto the children of Israel; but they hearkened not unto Him for anguish of spirit and for cruel bondage."[1]

II.

Moses was then fourscore, and Aaron fourscore and three years old, when they went in again unto Pharaoh to summon him to let Israel go. And according to the word of the Lord, when Pharaoh asked

[1] Ex. vi. 9.

what sign they wrought, Aaron then cast down his rod before him and before his servants, and it became a serpent. But the wise men and the sorcerers of Pharaoh's court did in like manner with their enchantments; for they cast down every man his rod, and it became a serpent; but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. Yet was Pharaoh's heart hardened, and he hearkened not unto the words of Moses.

This sign wrought by Moses as preamble to the judgments, and to the yet more remarkable signs that followed was very significant. It was aimed at the worship of the serpent tribe in general, and at that of Apap, or Apophis, the chief and largest of them, whether on earth or among the dead in Amenti. There is hardly an inscription or a page of hieroglyphic writing on the subject of the passage of the soul through the nether world, without a figure of this giant snake slain by the gods, with a dagger stuck in every coil of his huge body; the terror alike of the soul in migration and of the living above ground. So with the lesser reptiles of the kind, Sar, Haï, Sapi, Nahavka, Mehen, Neb-hotp, and the Araa, or basilisk, the emblem of royalty in Egypt; whether in her magical books,[1] in her litanies, or in the votive tablets raised for a safe passage of the departed through the plains of Aalu to the judgment hall of Osiris,—those serpents and snakes are, with their allied monsters, the crocodiles, in turn dreaded, propitiated, fought, and slain by the soul in her travels through the realms of Atum.

So that the turning of Aaron's rod into one of these objects of worship, and again that living god into a

[1] Pap. Harris, p. 88, 133, etc.

rod, was an evident proof of God's power over them, and a lesson to the Egyptians there assembled, gentle and simple, wise and foolish, that their worship was mean and low, whatever secret lore the learned among them might teach under such emblems. But the sign wrought by Moses was so far imitated by the serpent charmers of those days, who, like their brethren of the present time in various parts of the East, train snakes to stiffen themselves into a walking-stick, and at a given word to wriggle and to move about—that albeit Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods, yet their tricks sufficed as an excuse to Pharaoh for shutting his eyes to the real power of God's minister over the sham miracles of his own men.

Some men pretend that the sign of Moses's rod being turned into a serpent, mentioned in Ex. iv. 3 and vii. 15, is distinct from that recorded here at ch. vii. 9, 10, 12,—the term *nahash*, "snake or serpent," being used in the first instance; and *tannīn*, "monster," and by metonymy "crocodile," being adopted in the latter. But such an objection only proceeds from ignorance of the Egyptian idiom that repeatedly comes out in the style of Moses. He was learned in the wisdom of Egypt, and he writes accordingly, when making mention of that country. The Hebrew word *nahash* is generic for snake or serpent, but *tannīn* is specific for a huge serpent or monster; and no other term could well be used in Hebrew to describe Apap, the giant serpent of Egyptian worship. As the largest of sacred reptiles, it is used in hieroglyphic writing as determinative for "serpents," and also for "monsters" in general; though never for "crocodile," which is always determined by one of its own species.

Moses, therefore, when describing the first sign, Ex. iv., mentions a serpent in general, as known in Midian; but when he speaks of the same sign wrought yet more significantly before the king, he speaks of the serpent which, like Apap, asserted his power over all other smaller serpents, and, in this case, by swallowing them up. The serpent that came out of Aaron's rod, and that swallowed up the rods of the magicians, was not, and could not be a crocodile, or anything else indeed than a serpent called a "monster;" and although we need not suppose that it was of the huge dimensions of what we generally call a "monster," yet we may safely conclude that in appearance and colour that serpent reminded every one present of the monster serpent Apap; especially when it destroyed all the other snakes, and remained alone in presence of the astonished Fellows of the College of Memphis.

Very far, then, from this being a discrepancy, or a careless use of two different terms, as fondly said by certain men, who either cannot or will not look below the surface of things, it only shows the accuracy and knowledge of the writer and the point of the miracle.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TEN PLAGUES OF EGYPT.

It was winter, and Mei-en-Ptah was with his courtiers Kabu, Bek-en-ptah, and others, going at dawn to the river, and talking to them of the wonderful trick wrought by those two Hebrews the day before, when Moses and Aaron met him with his suite, and stood before them.

"Aprek," bow the head, shouted the herald. "Make way for the king,"—as he pushed them aside.

"Stay, Mei-en-Ptah, and listen," said Aaron; "I have a word for thee. The Lord of the Hebrews commanded thee to let His people go, but hitherto thou wouldest not hear. Behold, then, I will here in thy presence, lift up my rod over these waters, and smite with it the River which thou worshippest, thy god, and the Father of thy gods, and it shall be turned into blood, together with all the waters that flow from it."

"And he lifted up the rod and smote the waters that were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh, and in

the sight of his servants; and all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood. And the fish that was in the river died; and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river; and there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt. And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and Pharaoh's heart was hardened; and he turned and went into his house, neither did he set his heart to this also. And all the Egyptians digged round about the river for water to drink; for they could not drink of the water of the river. And seven days were fulfilled after that the Lord had smitten the river."

In order fully to understand the burden of this judgment, as well as the fulness of the miracle, we must bear in mind that Egypt, properly so called, was only the arable and fertile soil deposited on either side of the Nile during the inundation. Egypt, especially Lower Egypt, was the creation of the River, and as such was symbolized under the figure of Isis, to whom cows were sacred; while the Nile was alternately called the Father of gods, such as fish and crocodiles, the husband of Isis, and the Father of the Gods, when addressed as Hapi-muau, the water covering the land during the inundation; and then worshipped under the figure of Osiris-Apis, and also of the Bull Apis at Memphis, and of Mnevis or Oermeri at On.

Secondly, the water of the Nile was then not only the only water available in Egypt, but so delicious is it to drink, that it was then sent to great distances, as it is now-a-days, to pashas and other rich men when living away from the river. It was then cooled and filtered in bottles of clay of various and most elegant shapes, always kept full on a stand in the

hall of every Egyptian house, as we see it represented in tombs painted four thousand years ago, and as we find it done in every Egyptian house at the present day. For in that country, it rains so very seldom that rain-water is neither valued nor much reckoned upon; and as regards cisterns, they are supplied by water filtering from the river between the lowest layer of Nile mud and the sand or stone on which it rests. This explains to us—

Thirdly, not only the dismay of the Egyptians at seeing their river, their god, and the Father of their gods, turned into blood, but also the extraordinary privation and sufferings to which they were exposed in that climate during the seven days the plague lasted; and it explains also why they digged around the river to find water, and how it is they found it there. The judgment was aimed at the River, and at the fish thereof, several kinds of which were worshipped in various parts of Egypt; and it extended over all the fish-ponds, canals, tanks, and other reservoirs of water ostensibly supplied with water from the River; but where the water did not visibly flow from the River as offspring thereof, there it was good, and there the Egyptians were allowed to find it after much toil.

And, fourthly, the miracle lay in that, albeit the Nile turn red, and the colour of blood for a few days before the inundation in Epiphi, or June, the water is then as drinkable and the fish in it as healthy as at any other time. Whereas in Tybi, or January, the date of this miracle, when the River is both low and clear, it suddenly was changed from its natural tint, not to the colour of blood, but to blood itself, in which no

fish could live, and that spread pestilence all round, instead of health and well-being.

Under such circumstances—when all water was changed into blood—it required no great skill on the part of Pharaoh's magicians to imitate the miracle wrought by Moses, and to deceive Pharaoh. So that neither did he set his heart to this also.

II.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go that they may serve Me. And if thou refuse to let them go, behold I will smite all thy borders with frogs."

"And Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt.[1]—And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs upon the land of Egypt."

"Nevertheless Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and said, Intreat the Lord that He may take away the frogs from me and from my people; and I will let the people go that they may sacrifice unto the Lord."

He was beginning to repent of having asked, "Who is the Lord that I should obey Him?" and he was getting acquainted with Him. And Moses said to him: Command then; thou art at my mercy; but since thou promisest to let the people go, fix the time for the frogs to retreat back into the river.

"To-morrow," said Pharaoh. And Moses said, "Be it according to thy word; that thou mayest know that there is none like unto the Lord our God." And

[1] Ex. viii. 1–6.

the Lord did according to the word of Moses; and the frogs died, and they gathered them together upon heaps: and the land stank."

"And when Pharaoh saw there was respite he hardened his heart," and relapsed into his stolid, proud nature, that would yield only to brute force and to constraint. The judgment was over, and Pharaoh's word was broken. The Israelites should not go.

This wonder was wrought not only as a lesson to the king, but especially as a judgment on certain gods of Egypt; for they were in such number that nothing short of the sudden and complete overthrow of the whole country, could have at once executed judgment against all her gods.

In the days of Moses frogs were sacred not to the Sun but to Kek, the god of darkness, that is, to the primordial earthy matter, as to the male principle in nature; and for this reason frogs were often combined with other symbols expressive of the place they held in Egyptian worship. The frog was honoured at Hrur, in the Nome Sah, in Upper Egypt, as "the lady of Hrur," in connexion with Chmun represented as a ram; a complete symbol of spring life after the trance of winter. Therefore does Horapollo[1] tell us that the Egyptians represented a man coming to life —or regeneration, according to Chæremon—by a frog; since the frog, he says, is produced by the mud of the river, whence it sometimes appears partly frog and partly mud; which mud disappears with the fall of the river.

The river, then, was at the lowest when this miracle was wrought. And for this reason was the sign the

[1] Hierogl. lib. i. 25.

more significant; for it took place in Tybi (January) when there are in Egypt fewer frogs than at any other time of the year; the month Epiphi (June) being the season in which they teem at the rising of the River, when the ground seems alive with them. For this reason was the patron goddess of Epiphi represented with the head of a frog; and for this reason also is the frog often found on Egyptian sculptures, represented at the foot of the palm branch; a symbol used to imply years and periods of years, and therefore of constant renovation—the one of existence, the other of time.

III.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch out thy rod, and smite the dust of the land that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt. And they did so: and all the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt. And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not. Then said they unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God. But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them."[1]

This judgment was chiefly aimed at the rites and ceremonies of the Egyptian priests, whose name and symbol in Egyptian, *uab*, with water above and below, stands for "pure," "clean," "purification," and "holy." They shaved, Herodotus tells us, every three days, lest they should harbour lice or vermin of any kind while performing the service of their gods; preferring cleanliness to a handsome appearance.

[1] Ex. viii. 16–19.

Their ablutions were performed not only morning and evening, but also during the day; and they are represented always with their heads shaved, and scrupulously clean in their persons and in their garments, which were mostly white. So that this plague, while affecting all Egyptians, who were a very clean people, told especially upon the legions of priests that swarmed in all the sacred cities of Egypt, and in the following order: priests, holy fathers; then third, second, and first prophets of Amun, of Mnevis, Apis, Ptah or Osiris, as the case might be. This miracle being an absolute creation of living vermin out of the dust of the earth, the magicians were of course unable to work it; and were obliged to say, It is the finger of God.

IV.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh; lo, he cometh forth to the water, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Let My people go that they may serve Me, else, if thou wilt not let My people go, behold I will send swarms of flies upon thee, and upon thy servants; and I will sever the land of Goshen, in which My people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there; to the end thou mayest know that I am the Lord in the midst of the earth. To-morrow shall this sign be. And the Lord did so. And there came a grievous swarm of flies into the house of Pharaoh, and into his servants' houses, and into all the land of Egypt: the land was corrupted by reason of the swarm of flies."

Independently of the woeful infliction of such a plague, of which those who have resided in hot and

marshy countries may form a faint idea, this "swarm" or "mixture of flies" included all the winged gods or objects of worship of the insect kind common in Egypt.

Foremost among these was the common beetle of Egypt (*Scarabæus sacer*, L.), that may be seen on every sand-bank, rolling with its hind feet a ball of mud, sand, and other matter, containing its eggs. This ball is perfectly spherical, and as such was by the Egyptians taken as a figure of the earth; and the beetle, as a symbol of the Creator, was by them also called "cheper," or "maker;" the name they gave to the sun at noon, when his perpendicular rays seem to call the mud of Egypt into animal and vegetable life. As such, it is represented on all their monuments, and was worn by every Egyptian as an amulet, either in the shape of a seal or otherwise; and figures of it are at the present day the most common of all relics of ancient Egypt.

Among these insects were also swarms of the wasp, which, from the highest antiquity, has been the symbol of Lower Egypt, and is thus affixed to the proper name of every sovereign of that part of the kingdom; and of course to that of Mei-en-ptah Hotephima, as sovereign over both Upper and Lower Egypt. And with these, bees and chafers, flies, gnats, and mosquitoes of all sorts—a plague to be understood by those only who have endured them in the swamps of Bengal, or on the moist banks of the Nile.

And there they fairly broke Pharaoh's haughty spirit; he could stand the torment no longer, but called for Moses and for Aaron and said, in despair, "Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land."

But this could not be. Israel could not hold a feast unto the Lord in Egypt, whence he must be brought out, and which he must leave for ever. "It is not meet so to do," said Moses, "for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the Lord our God; lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will not they stone us?" The Aperi-u fared ill already, but far worse would their lot have been had their lords the Egyptians seen them offering sacrifices of bulls around the shrine of Apis, of calves around that of Oer-Meri at On, or of sheep and goats within sight of the temples dedicated to such gods.

"Nay," said Moses, "we will go three days into the wilderness,"—outside Egypt proper—"and sacrifice to the Lord our God, as He shall command us." And Pharaoh said, I will let you go into the wilderness, only ye shall not go far away. Intreat for me. And Moses intreated the Lord, Who removed the flies, and "there remained not one."

This was rest indeed for Pharaoh, who, seeing there was respite, hardened his heart yet more, and would not let the people go.

V.

"Then the Lord said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh, and tell him, Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, let My people go that they may serve Me. For if thou refuse to let them go, and wilt hold them still, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thy cattle —there shall be a very grievous murrain. To-morrow the Lord shall do this thing in the land."

"And the Lord did that thing on the morrow, and

all the cattle of Egypt died: but of the cattle of the children of Israel died not one,"—and the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go.

He might witness the death of the cattle, of the cows, bulls, goats, sheep, dogs, and cats he was wont to worship, and even bear the loss of the horses in which he gloried, more easily than the sting of Egyptian flies that wrung from him a grudging leave to the people.

The worship of Mei-en-ptah's gods had no hold on him. What hold could the worship of a sheep have on one who saw that sheep, adored in one city and eaten in the next, or that of Apis, one of the "nefr ehe-u,"—good oxen set apart for his own table? Nothing could make impression on a mind so stolid and so selfish but personal suffering; and that was being prepared.

But, albeit he might care little for the death of Apis anent his own palace at Memphis, or for the wailing and lamentations heard at On over the carcase of Oer-Meri, or at Mendes over that of the goat Baempi, or at Pebast at the sight of the cat lying dead on the marble floor of the splendid temple in which it sat supreme—yet was the judgment nevertheless terrible, not only as causing the death of the kine and other cattle of Egypt, for which that land was famous, but also as killing by the invisible hand of the God of the Hebrews the live gods of Egypt, and thus showing her people both the power of the Lord, Whom their king neither knew nor would obey, over the objects of their worship, and also the folly of such worship. When, on the morrow, Apis, Mnevis, and the other

sacred animals lay dead in their shrines, great was the mourning of the Egyptians for them. The Lord of the Hebrews was then over them, the Lord of lords, and the God of gods, although they saw it not.

VI.

The Lord's judgments were now fast succeeding one another upon Pharaoh. Moses took a handful of ashes from a furnace, and sprinkled it towards heaven in the presence of the king, and it became dust over all the land of Egypt, and was a boil breaking forth with blains upon man and upon beast. "And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils."

But Pharaoh hearkened not. This visitation, however terrible for the people, failed to subdue Pharaoh's besotted mind. Not even this effect of the dreaded Thures, or south wind, unknown, unexpected at this time of year, and aggravated a thousandfold, could awaken him from his stupor. His day was not yet come, though at hand. He had often been reproved, and had as often hardened his neck, and was anon to be cut off, and that without remedy.[1]

VII.

For the Lord sent Moses to Pharaoh early the next morning with this message:—

"Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, Let My people go that they may serve Me. For I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart—that thou mayest know that there is none like Me in all the earth. For I will stretch out My hand, that I may

[1] Prov. xxix. 1.

smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth. And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee My power; and that My name may be declared throughout all the earth."

"And yet, exaltest thou thyself against My people, that thou wilt not let them go?—To-morrow, about this time."

"Then the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch forth thine hand towards heaven. And Moses did so; and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground—fire mingled with hail—such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. And the hail smote both man and beast, and every herb of the field, and every tree of the field. Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, was there no hail."

And Pharaoh sent and called Moses and Aaron, and said, I have sinned this time, the Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked. Intreat the Lord for me—for it is enough—that there be no more mighty thunderings and hail; and I will let you go, and ye shall stay no longer.

"And Moses went out of the city and spread abroad his hands unto the Lord, and the thunders and hail ceased, and the rain was not poured upon the earth."

"And when Pharaoh saw that the rain and hail and the thunderings were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart; neither would he let the children of Israel go."

This must have happened somewhere about the middle of Mechir, which answers partly to February, when the crops in Egypt are in full vigour, in bloom,

or, like the barley, in the ear, and like the flax already bolled. So terrible a calamity could not have fallen upon the land at a time when it would be more disastrous and more severely felt than at that season—when, after the cattle had died, the hope of food for man and the source of wealth, were swept away in one day.

The miracle lay not wholly in hail and rain at that particular time, since we find in the calendar for Alexandria and for Lower Egypt, left us by Ptolemy, that it sometimes hails in Egypt at that time. But the particular display of God's power lay both in the severity of the storm,—none such had ever been seen in Egypt,—and also, we cannot but think, in sending the hail at that season, and at no other, for the purpose of fixing to all time the date of the Passover, when we read that, "The flax and the barley was smitten, for the barley was in the ear and the flax was bolled. But the wheat and the rye were not smitten, for they were not grown up."[1]

As soon in the autumn as the Nile has again retired into its bed, after having overflowed the lands, crops are put in all over Egypt. They grow so fast in her exuberant soil, and so soon ripen, that the clover sown in November is, within three weeks or a month, already fit to cut, and the flax sown at the same time is then also in bloom. There, as in general over that part of the East, barley is sown one month earlier than wheat; it therefore ripens during February, and is reaped early in March, three weeks or a month before wheat, which ripens in March and is reaped in April. The hail then fell upon Egypt in the interval

[1] Ex. ix. 31, 32.

between the growth of the barley and that of the wheat; when the barley was *āvīv* or *ābīb* in the ear, green, and the wheat and rye were still *aphīlōth*, hidden, or under ground.

This, in an average year, must have been between the first and the third week in Mechir, that is, in the early part or towards the end of February; and ere the wheat or rye had sprouted up, and had thus escaped being smitten with "every herb of the field." These two came up after the hail, and ere the locusts were sent to devour it up, until Egypt was "destroyed."

It matters little whether the hail fell a week earlier or later; it is enough for us to see that it must have fallen within the month of *āvīv*, that is, of "the green ear," that must, of course, be said not of the second crop of wheat ears, but of the first and earlier crop of barley. And this must have happened on this year, the year of a new state of existence, of a new beginning, at the earliest time at which it could have happened, that is, in Mechir, about the middle or end of February, so as to make that first Passover, on the fourteenth of the month or moon "of the green ear," fall on the earliest possible date in Phamenoth, or March.

This shows, as we shall again see, that the Passover, the most remarkable event and solemn commemorative feast of the people of Israel, was determined and fixed by the season of the year at which the very first fruits appear; in the month "of the new fruits," as the Egyptian Church has always called it. And this rests on the unchanging order of the seasons; but is fixed at the outset by the fact of the hail smiting the barley that was already in the ear, and not the wheat that was not yet come up. It is easy for ignorant,

careless, or superficial men to gainsay Scripture; but in all important details it will stand the test of real and earnest inquiry, and be held up for what it is—the Scripture of Truth—by those who are either able or honest enough to look below the surface of it.

VIII.

The hail and the thunder—"the voices from heaven"—ceased at the request of Moses, and Pharaoh fell back into his former stubborn frame of mind. But not for long. The most fearful of the judgments his hard heart had brought upon him were yet to come.

Moses and Aaron therefore went in and said to him, "Thus saith the Lord, Now wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before Me? let My people go that they may serve Me. Else, if thou refuse to let My people go, behold, to-morrow I will bring the locusts into thy coast,—and they shall cover the face of the earth and eat the residue of that which is escaped, which remaineth unto you from the hail—such locusts as never were before seen in thy land. And he turned himself, and went out from Pharaoh."

He did not wait for an answer; for he had none to ask. He came to deliver a message, and left the stolid monarch besotted and stupefied after all that had befallen him; yet harder in heart than ever, and only waiting for the full award of his doom.

Then Seti-Mei-en-ptah, Katu, Sotp-en-Amun, and others of his court, came to him and tried to bring him to reason. "How long," said they, "shall this man be a snare unto us? let the men go that they may serve the Lord their God. Knowest thou not that Egypt is destroyed?"

"Well did my father say shepherds were the plague,"[1] replied Mei-en-ptah. "Call them back."

"And Moses and Aaron were brought again unto Pharaoh, and he said unto them, Go, serve the Lord your God. But stay; who are they that shall go?"

"And Moses said, We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go; for we must hold a feast unto the Lord."[2]

Not so, replied Pharaoh. "Let the Lord be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones: look ye to it; for evil is before you. Not so; go ye that are men, and serve the Lord; for that ye did desire." Now, get ye gone. And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.

And so he settled it. But "Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt, and the Lord brought an east wind upon the land all that day and all that night, and when it was morning the east wind brought the locusts: and they went up over all the land of Egypt, and rested in all the coasts of Egypt; very grievous were they; before them there were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be such. For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left,"—which had sprouted up or budded and blossomed since the plague of hail—"and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the fields, through all the land of Egypt."

Truly was Egypt destroyed, as Pharaoh's ministers said to him. The kine were dead; the barley crop

[1] *Aat-u.* [2] Ex. x. 7, 10.

and the flax were both smitten and blasted, and now the wheat and rye, the rice and lentils, and all the fruits of that fruitful land, were irretrievably lost for that year; and death or famine stared the king and his people in the face.

The Egyptian heavens had rung with wailing, lamentations, and woe at the death of Apis, and had not ceased, from want of another to fill his place, when the next most terrible scourge fell on that doomed land, and the locusts came up to finish the work of desolation begun by the hail. Egypt, the richest of all lands, and the storehouse of nations, was now laid waste and desolate. Isis was now wailing in earnest for Osiris. He had yet to wage war with Apap ere he could command Hapi-muau to go and fertilize the land. Dearth was come, drought was coming apace, and twelve long months must elapse ere Egypt could again hope for blessing from the land. She was doomed; her river had been defiled; her gods were set at naught, her cattle was killed, her priests insulted, her crops destroyed, and her people famished; yet the heart of her king would not yield. But the end was not yet.

The miracle of this plague of the locusts lay not only in the intensity of the scourge, but also in the fact that in order to work it, God reversed the order of nature under like circumstances at other seasons. The locust is a frequent scourge of Egypt; but the clouds of these insects, which often darken the sky and literally cover the earth where they alight, are brought later in the year, and always from the African desert by the southerly winds, which are dreaded, not merely as harbingers of this plague, but also for their blighting

effect on all vegetation, and for their epidemic influence over animal life. No one can imagine it who has not felt it. On the other hand, the east-wind in Egypt is soft, healthy, and favourable, and would not, under ordinary circumstances, bring locusts into Egypt.

Whereas, in this case, it was the east-wind, which, after having blown a whole day and night, brought the locusts from the quarter of the Red Sea, whence Egyptians were wont to expect and to receive health and life; since, in placing their cities and in building their houses, they chose situations most exposed to the east-wind, as the most conducive to health. And as that wind did bring the locusts, so did the westerly wind, that usually brought them, cast them into the Red Sea, into that "tank of Punt," where, says the Ritual of the Dead, the Tesem god was also cast, and perished; there in that last abode of all the foes of Egypt.

Again did Pharaoh confess he had sinned; again he prayed for forgiveness; again was he forgiven, and not one locust remained in the land; but then also did he again harden his heart and would not let the children of Israel go.

IX.

The land of Egypt was now judged, but the heavens of Egypt were as yet out of reach of such terrible convulsions. What hand could be lifted up so high, or what power could touch Ra, Cheper, and Atum, the sun at his rise, in his noonday splendour, and setting in all his glory?

While the River was being turned into blood, while the smiling meadows on either side of it were being

made a wilderness, and the fat kine of the river-side lay dead on the banks, the sun continued to shine by day in a cloudless sky, and the moon by night in a brilliant firmament, as if nowise concerned in the earth below. Those two eyes of Osiris were not dim, and could not be dimmed, thought the Pharaoh beloved of Ptah; Ra rose as usual over the distant hills of Punt in the East; Cheper glared as of old and poured down the same shower of heat and light; and Atum, after sinking behind his glowing mountains in the West, then rose over the plain of Hatapham and still blessed the fields of Aalu, in Amenti. Egypt could not die as long as her Sun did shine; but without him she could not live.

Therefore was he also to be judged, but only as her Sun, not as the sun of other lands. But why such terrible judgments, such unrelenting doom on all that was rich and lovely on earth, and glorious above in the Egyptian world?

It was with a high hand and stretched-out arm indeed that the Lord God Almighty had to rescue His people from the iron grasp of the Egyptian king. And ere this one would yield, not only was his land to be laid waste as if accursed, but his sky was to be darkened, and his father Ra to disappear from the blue heavens in which he was wont to begin and end his daily course in greater splendour than in any other skies; and the clear transparent waters of Nut, over which he smoothly sailed in his bark, were to be turned into the gloom of Typhon, into realms of darkness that might be felt, until the heart of every Egyptian sank within him at the sight of such an awful overthrow of heaven and earth.

"For the Lord commanded Moses, and he stretched forth his hand towards heaven—the blue, cloudless heaven of Egypt,—and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days. They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days; but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings."[1]

Of all the judgments sent to break Pharaoh's heart and to terrify his people, this was yet the most awful; at the time especially when the moon should have been bright in the midnight sky.

Whatever lamentations might have been heard ere this on the banks of the Nile, they were as nothing to the utter terror and dismay with which the affrighted Egyptians beheld neither sun nor moon for three days and three nights. This was the death of Osiris and of Isis at once; the convulsion, the end of their upper and nether worlds, of their faith, of their worship of their gods, of their hopes,—the beginning of such terror, that they did not stir from their houses; but every one, even though living under the same roof, was a stranger to his fellow and could not see him. It was, in sooth, at once the doom of the living and of the dead—the doom of Isis, of Ra, Cheper, Atum, and Shu-si-ra, Har and Harmachu, and of Nut his mother; of Osiris, the father of all gods, the supreme Lord of Egypt, and the judge of Amenti. In vain did the priests of On, astonished at this long night, pour forth their terror in earnest litanies to their god:

"Hail, O son of Phra, born of Tum himself; self-existent without another, Lord of Righteousness and Truth, Sovereign Ruler of the gods!"

[1] Ex. x. 21.

. "O thou that scatterest the storm, shine; O shine through this desolation, in thy name of Spent-Ta."[1]

But no answer; for it was the Lord's judgment on that god of Egypt. Not until He bade the darkness disappear, did Osiris shine as before in all his splendour. Then what joy among the people!

So Pharaoh sent for Moses, and said to him, Go ye, serve the Lord your God, only let your herds be stayed; let your little ones also go with you. And Moses said, "Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not an hoof be left behind, for thereof must we take to serve the Lord our God; and we know not with what we must serve the Lord until we come thither."

Words that seem to have been overlooked by those who pretend to tell us that Moses borrowed from Egypt the rites and sacrifices he instituted in the wilderness. It is a pity that those who are ever casting about to find plausible fault with something or other in the Bible should not, for their own character's sake, take the pain to inform themselves on the subject. All sacrifices, of whatever kind, and by whomsoever offered, must have many points in common; as, for instance, the broiling of human hearts on the altars of the Mexican god Tezcatlipuk, the burning of children to Moloch, and the sacrifice of Isaac; but the rites instituted by Moses were no more borrowed from Egyptian rites as such, and could have no more in common with the worship of a people that was to be hated, abjured, and the names of whose gods were never to be mentioned by an Israelite—than they were copied from human sacrifices in Mexico.

Yet, after all, Pharaoh would not let the people go.

[1] Storm destroyer.

Wearied and exasperate, He only said to Moses, "Get thee from me; take heed to thyself, see my face no more; for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die."

Little did he know what yet awaited him; but Moses knew it; and Moses said to him, "Thou hast spoken well; I will see thy face again no more."

The sentence had gone forth, and his doom was sealed. From this moment Moses and Aaron were released from their interviews with him: he had cast them off, and refused to let the people go out of his land, although Moses warned him that anon his own servants would come and beseech Israel to be gone out of the land with his cattle, and that he should not go until they had done so. And he went out from before Pharaoh in a great anger.[1]

X.—THE LAST PLAGUE. THE PASSOVER.

(I.)

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence." "About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt; and all the first-born in the land of Egppt shall die, from the first-born of Pharaoh[2] that sitteth upon his throne even unto the first-born of the maidservant that is behind the mill, and all the first-born of beasts. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more."[3]

[1] Ex. xi. 6.

[2] But Mei-en-ptah's son Seti II. succeeded him. Seti II. himself, however, left no son. See note on Chap. II.

[3] Ex. xi. 1–7.

The hour was come at last when the fetters of the captive people should be broken. One last struggle with the warden of the prison gates, one more blow that will stun him and lay him prostrate, and the rush is made for freedom from his grasp. Egypt had been convulsed in her pangs, and had now cried long enough in the throes of her travail for the birth of the people of God into newness of life. Great had been her crimes, and great was her sorrow; but great also is unto all ages her honour as having been the nursing mother of a people greater than herself, of Israel, God's eldest son.

Pharaoh had been warned of it. "Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my first-born; and I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: And if thou refuse to let him go—behold, I will slay thy son, even thy first-born." [1]

His first-born, then, was now to be slain, and wailing, lamentation, and woe were about to ring from one end of Egypt to the other for the sudden death of the first-born in every house. "But against any of the children of Israel should not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast, that Pharaoh and his people might know that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel."

"This do," said the Lord to Moses and to Aaron; "Speak unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, Take every man a lamb, a lamb for a house, without blemish a male of the first year: And ye shall kill it in the evening, and ye shall take of the blood and strike it on the two side-posts and on the upper door-post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it; and ye

[1] Ex. iv. 22.

shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire,[1] and unleavened bread, and with bitter herbs; ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; neither shall ye break a bone thereof;[2] and ye shall eat it with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand. Ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord's passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment. I am the Lord."

"And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you when I smite the land of Egypt.

"And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.

"And it shall come to pass when ye be come to the land which the Lord will give you, according as He hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. And when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service?—that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, Who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He smote the Egyptians and delivered our houses. And the people

[1] "And that lamb that was ordered to be roasted whole," says Justin Martyr, "was a symbol of the cross on which Christ was to suffer; for the lamb when roasted is roasted in the form of a cross, since it is spitted both lengthways and also crossways, from arm to arm." (Dial. c. Tryph. p. 239.)

[2] Numb. ix. 12; S. John, xix. 33-36.

bowed the head and worshipped; and the children of Israel went away, and did as the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they.

"And it came to pass that at midnight the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt: from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the first-born of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the first-born of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night; he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house in which there was not one dead."

Awful night that—and yet more awful morn when the sun arose over the plains of Memphis, and Osiris smiled upon the glittering but desolate city, as it were in mockery of the cries of agony and of despair that rang within her palaces, and that came forth from every house within her walls.

Pharaoh and his people had retired to rest, wearied with the contest, yet trusting in the shadowing wings of their god Cheper, spread over the entrance of their houses. But of what avail?

The angel of death wared it not, unknown as the symbol was in the realms whence he came; though he halted in awe before the blood of the lamb without blemish sprinkled over the doorway of the poor bondman's home. The angel knew that mark: he passed over, and dared not touch that house. It was then saved from death by that blood,—a shadow of the Blood of the Lamb that has redeemed us.[1]

[1] "Thus," says S. Cyril (Catech. x.), "did the lamb ordained by Moses keep the slayer at a distance; and shall not the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world, much rather deliver us from our sins? And if the blood of a beast gave deliverance, how much more shall the blood of the only begotten Son work salvation for us?"

The Israelites awoke out of sleep, arose, and how thankful were they to have hearkened unto Moses, and to have in faith and obedience taken in hand the bunch of hyssop and with it sprinkled the blood over their lowly dwellings! They had escaped from death, and now they were free.

They rejoiced with exceeding joy, and their joy was heard, when anon the hosts of heaven sang a new song, the Song of the Lamb, and said, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth;" to which others answered "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing!"—echoes of this reached the earth, that sang in return, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever." Then silence was made, and under the whole heaven was heard "Amen!"[1]

"One body, one spirit, one hope of our calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is above all, through all, and in us all!"[2]—redeemed as we were from our vain conversation, not with corruptible things as silver and gold, "but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot; Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for 'us, who by Him believe in God, that raised Him up from the dead and

[1] Rev. v. [2] Eph. iv. 5.

gave Him glory, that our faith and life might be in God."[1]

(II.)

Escape from bondage, and rescue from death—was indeed the beginning of a new existence for the children of Israel. Therefore did God say to Moses and to Aaron, "This month shall be to you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you."

What month?—No other name for it than "the month of the green ear," the first-fruits of the first crop—the barley harvest; that is, the early spring. A new existence could have begun at no other time, when the earth, coming into life, sings a new hymn of praise unto Him who made all things good; and Who calls her into being after her trance of winter months. It was the season of flowers and of fruits when Israel was rescued from the brick-kilns of Egypt,—the season at which the land is freshest and best, entering upon a year of fruitfulness and plenty.

The Passover therefore—a shadow as it was meant to be of good things to come, the body of which is of Christ—was, and indeed, must have been, a festival not of any particular date, but of a particular season —Spring. Had it been a feast determined by a particular date, we should have had it so stated; but, as the Israelites had no reckoning of their own during their four hundred years of servitude in Egypt, and as they were also to have nothing in common with Egypt after they once left it, no Egyptian month is stated, nor any particular name given to it, like the later ones, Ziv, Chislev, Bul, and others; but God

[1] 1 Pet. i. 18.

simply said, This month, the month in which this feast takes place, the month of the first green ear, *ābīb*, shall be to you from henceforth, the beginning of months and of the year.

But, as this season of "the green ear" varies within one month, in the revolution of the seasons, the children of Israel afterwards introduced an intercalary month, Ve-adar,—so that, come what would, the Passover should always be celebrated at the same season of the year, as Eliah B. Mosheh tells us,[1] "in order to make the year of thirteen months, and so as that the first-fruits, or *ābīb*, always be in the first month." "Wherefore then is this Ve-adar introduced?" says Maimonides. "Because of the time of the first-fruits, that the first month be in the time of them."[2]

Therefore also did the Egyptian Church from the first keep the Passover at that same season. The Paschal month, that is, the month during which the Passover may be celebrated according to the seasons, lasts, says Theodorus Gaza,[3] from the 8th of March to the 5th of April; while S. Cyril of Alexandria,[4] referring it, of course, to Christ, says, "the season is fixed at the beginning of the year, in the first month of the religious service; wherefore is the solemn assembly in the month of the new fruits; for 'old things are passed away, as S. Paul says, behold, all things are become new'; and man's nature springs and blossoms afresh towards its first origin in Christ."

[1] Joh. Selden. Diss. Ann. Civ. Jud. p. clxi.
[2] De Sanctif. Novil. c. iv. Ugol. vol. xvii. p. 233.
[3] De Mensib. xiv. [4] Com. Exod. lib. ii. p. 267, ed. Par.

The Passover happened on the anniversary of the Creation, that took place in spring, when the earth was fresh and in bloom, when it sang a hymn of jubilant praise unto Him who had just called it into being, and rejoiced in its own existence; the only season at which the sacrifice of the Lamb without blemish, and the resurrection of Christ could have taken place, commemorated as they both are in "the death unto sin and the new birth unto righteousness," which every one of us professes to believe. Therefore also do we, on the morning of His resurrection, sing in remembrance of it, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."[1]

It was, then, not in the month Abib, that did not exist, nor in the month Nisan, that was then unknown, nor in any other month whatsoever, called by any particular name, that the Passover was instituted; but it was in the month of "the green ear" of the first crop, according to the Hebrew, or of "the new fruits," according to the Septuagint and to the Coptic version; and by God's order "it was to be kept at this season only from year to year."[2]

[1] 1 Cor v. 7.

[2] Ex. xiii. 10. It is against all grammar to render the Hebrew of Ex. xiii. 4, xxiii. 15, xxxiv. 18, etc., "the month Abib," inasmuch as proper names in Hebrew take no article; witness the other names of months, Ziv, Bul, Thebeth, etc., Heb. ii. 1; Esth. ii. 16, iii. 7, etc. Whereas *ãvīv*, like *etkãnīm*, 1 Kings viii. 2, has the article, and is thereby proved to be a common and not a proper name. It is treated as a common name in the sense of "green ear" and "first-fruits" by almost every Jewish writer on the subject, and by every sound Hebrew

Why at that particular season and at no other? It was so ordered of Him Who planned and wrought the deliverance of the children of Israel from bondage, as the fittest season for their birth into a new existence; not only as being set free from bondage, but as being constituted His people. Hitherto they had been slaves, now they were to be servants of Him Whose service is freedom from the bondage of sin, and from the hold of death; and while His servants, yet kings and priests among the other nations of the earth; so exalted is the service of the Most High. At no other season could they have so well begun this new birth, or this coming to life after four hundred years of political death; and by nothing could they have been reminded of it so plainly as by the new flowers and the new fruits,—emblems, after the long winter months, of Him Who was to be "the first-born of every creature," and "the first-fruits of them that slept." On Him the whole institution centred; to Him it pointed, and Him it typified so plainly as to be justly

scholar; and there is, therefore, no "month Abib" in the Hebrew calendar; if placed there, it is by mistake. It is the month "of the green ear," or of "first-fruits," as the month called Ethanim is no such month, but "the month of torrents," Tisri. We may then estimate at their real value the fancies of those who find in *abib* the month corresponding to *Abib*, the Arabic pronunciation of *Epiphi* in the Coptic calendar; and who would thus not only place the Passover in the hottest month in the year, but also make it an imitation of an Egyptian festival,—this too, in the face of facts, to which the Jewish and the Christian Churches have assented from the first. One hardly knows which to wonder at most, the ignorance or the presumption of such persons. Anything, it matters not what, even the most preposterous and absurd assertions without a shadow of proof, if by any means the Word of God may be attacked, and the truth of it gainsayed! But it is proof against the cavils of such men.

called "the feast," both by the Church of God and by the Church of Christ—both under the shadows of the Law, and in the light of the Gospel;—the feast of Him Whose resurrection, as pledge of our own, is for us the spring-tide of eternal life.

Therefore, also, do we keep the feast on the first day of the week—the Lord's Day—and not on the Friday, the day of His death. On the Day of His resurrection only could we celebrate the Passover with feelings akin to those of the Israelites, who saw in the lamb whose blood they sprinkled, and whose flesh they ate, the means at once of their deliverance from death and of their rescue from bondage.

For it could only be on the Day Christ rose from the dead that His Church might sing a hymn of praise and thanksgiving in token of her being passed from death unto life through Him and in Him. And on that Day alone, also, could we bring our heave-offerings of a handful of the flowers on which He smiled, as emblems of our being saved by Him from the death of sin, by Him rescued from the bondage of Satan, and in Him also born afresh unto newness of life.

CHAPTER V.

THE EXODUS.

I.

But ere the morning dawned over the desolate land, "Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the Lord as ye have said. Also take your flocks and your herds as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also.

"And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, We be all dead men.

"And the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading-troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders. And they borrowed jewels of gold and silver, and raiment of the Egyptians, who lent them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians."[1]

Leave to go need not have been asked; yet it was

[1] Ex. xii. 31.

meet that leave should be wrung from the proud king, who but a few weeks before asked, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey Him? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go,"—and that he should acknowledge himself humbled under the hand of the Lord, and thus bid the Israelites be gone—not at their leisure, but in haste.

Six hundred thousand of them, besides a large mixed multitude with flocks and herds and very much cattle, left Rameses at a moment's warning, and in such a hurry, that they took with them their dough ere it was leavened—dough made of the barley just ripe in the land of Rameses, which no hail had injured,—and of it baked unleavened cakes on the morrow. For "they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry to prepare themselves any victual," in that night of the Lord to be much observed of all the children of Israel in their generations.

"Remember this day," said Moses to the people, on the morrow, when they saw themselves free from the grasp of their oppressors; "the day in which ye came out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand, the Lord brought you out from this place; there shall no leavened bread be eaten. This day came ye out, in the month of the green ear. Seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day shall be a feast to the Lord. Thou shalt, therefore, keep this ordinance in his season from year to year. And it shall be when the Lord shall bring thee to the land of the Canaanites, which He sware unto thy fathers to give them, that thou shalt set apart, or cause to pass over, all that openeth the womb, and every firstling of beast; the males shall be the Lord's.

But every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb, if not thou shalt break his neck; and all the first-born of man shalt thou redeem."

"And when thy son asketh thee, what meaneth this?—then thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt from the house of bondage. And it came to pass when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the Lord slew all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both the first-born of man and the first-born of beast; therefore, I sacrifice unto the Lord all that openeth the womb, being males; but all the first-born of my children I redeem."

Whatever typical meaning there might be in this institution on God's part, it was the heaviest tribute of entire servitude He could claim. Independently of the evident figure or ensample of the people or Church of God as brought out of the world, represented in the children of Israel's rescue fron Egyptian bondage, it is very probable that their rebellious and stiff-necked nature required the long and humble beginning of four hundred years' oppression. They were constantly reminded of it by God in after time, and as we shall see, several institutions in their commonwealth rested on their having been bondmen in Egypt, and in exchanging that slavery for their servitude to God. Never, in fact, was a people less free than were the Israelites when they left Egypt under the command of Moses; the only and great difference being that, whereas in Egypt they groaned under the brute force of their heathen masters, they now became servants of Him, Whom to serve is both life and peace. But this life and this peace, nevertheless, require absolute obedience to Him on the part of His servants,

who, on condition of these eternal blessings, are to make His will their pleasure, and to consider it supreme.

Yet, no doubt, this tribute or offering of the first-born of man and beast to God, had regard unto Him who is "the first-born among many brethren,"[1] and "the first-born of every creature,"[2] "the beginning, the first-born from the dead." For under the Law every shadow of good things to come, the body of which was of Christ, was cast, as it must have been, by that one Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings, whose dawning light, until He appeared, showed the place where He would rise, and cast distinct, though faint shadows, over the people and the land of His birth.

Few, however, but such as were taught from above, distinguished the outline of those shadows, and saw in them the object they were meant to represent; they troubled themselves far more with the objects over which the shadow fell than with the outline of the shadow itself, though by far the more important of the two. The mass of the Israelites, therefore, saw in this offering of the first-born of man and beast a heavy tribute of servitude; it was a virtual surrendering of their self-government, a complete sacrifice of their freedom as an independent people; for in no other way could they have been more forcibly reminded of their dependence on the sovereign rule of another, than by the fact that the first-born of their own offspring were not theirs, but that their Sovereign's hand was laid on them even before their birth. They were the Lord's; and although they might be re-

[1] Rom. viii. 29. [2] Col. i. 15, 18.

deemed from actual sacrifice to Him like other victims that were slain, yet the redemption reminded them of Him to Whom they belonged, to Whom they were set apart and of right dedicated, and for this reason alone entitled to the rights and distinction of first-born among their brethren. This right is, we see, of divine institution, and, like that of tithes and other such, cannot lightly be set aside by a people that looks to God's blessing and values it.

Why, however, was the firstling of an ass alone of all animals, redeemed, and if not redeemed, was it to be killed, but not sacrificed unto the Lord, since the ass was not an unclean beast? A kind of reproach must have attached to that animal among the Israelites, even before they left Egypt; or there must have been some reason connected with the Egyptians' treatment of the ass that should thus single it out, at the outset, from all other cattle.

The reason, may be, was this; that as we find on the oldest sculptures extant in Egypt—the ass was the symbol of Seth or Sutech, the god of the Hittites whose worship was brought into Egypt by the Shepherd Kings, and especially maintained by Apepj II., at whose court Joseph probably came. It was always, and ever since, associated with Baal on Egyptian monuments, and even called by that name, until under the Pharaohs of the XVIIIth, XIXth, and later dynasties, the ass became the symbol embodying Seth, Baal, and all other foreign gods. The Israelites must have seen, every day of their life, especially at the beginning of their sojourn in Egypt, worshippers of such a god; and they must, during the whole of their residence there, have been familiar with the

figure of the ass on almost every monument they beheld, as connected with the gods of Canaan, especially Baal. Since, however, the ass was indispensable to them for domestic purposes as inhabitants of Canaan, and as once bondmen in Egypt, it could not be that an animal made so especially remarkable and obnoxious in Egypt, by being connected with the heathenish rites of Canaan, should not be branded for ever after among the Israelites when residents in that land.

It is also worth noticing that Mei-en-ptah Hotephima, who is supposed to be the Pharaoh that perished in the Red Sea, revived the worship of "Seth, the god of Avaris," represented by the ass; and, if so, it is very possible that the Israelites may have been reminded of that one Pharaoh, by the especial distinction put upon their favourite beast of burden. For the ass was singled out in Lower Egypt, ever since the first dynasty of the Shasu, or Menau, the Shepherd Kings, also called Aat-u, "the plague;" and even centuries before the coming of Abraham into Egypt. All other reasons must be subsequent to this date.

The start, then, was made from Rameses, in the land of Goshen.[1] And God, we are told, did not lead the children of Israel through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near, lest the people should repent when they saw war—raging at that time in southern Canaan—and return to Egypt: but God led the people about through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea: and the children of Israel went up harnessed—in marching order of five in a rank—out of the land of Egypt."

[1] Ex. xii. 17.

II.

And they took their journey from Succoth, their halt on the first day from Rameses, and encamped in Etham in the edge of the wilderness—that is, beyond the arable land which constituted Egypt proper. These localities are unknown, as well as the exact situation of Rameses, which is, by some, identified with Tanis, by others with Avaris—two very improbable opinions,—and by others again with Heroopolis, which is more probable, or with Bilbeis, at the entrance from Egypt of Wady Tumilāt, where the ancient canal that joined the Nile with the Heroopolite Gulf branched off from the river; which opinion is perhaps most likely correct. Thus the children of Israel were now outside the green fields and rich pastures of Goshen, and on the borders of the wilderness that extends thence to what must have been sea at that time.[1]

[1] For albeit there exists a whole literature on the topography of the Exodus, no one has yet been able to ascertain the exact spot of the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea; partly from its being impossible to fix the situation of Succoth, Etham, Pi-hahiroth, etc., and also because there are evident traces left to show that the northernmost end of the Red Sea, called the Heroopolite Gulf, extended much further north than it does at present, even unto the Timsah lake, which, at that time, formed the extremity of the gulf. Not only does the account left us by Greek historians, who tell us of the palm and other trees incrusted with salt to be found there, lead us to the conclusion that the basin or depression that may be traced in the sand north of the present Gulf of Suez, as far as the salt lake Timsah, was once a part of the gulf; but this seems placed beyond doubt by the further proof that the lake Timsah is full of the *saris* or *shari*, in Arabic *boodh*, the *arundo Ægyptiaca*, that gave the name of *Phiom am Shari*, "sea of the reed," to the Heroopolite Gulf,—a term still extant in the native name *Ghubbet boodh*, or "bay of the reed," given to a small bay at the end of the valley Ghoweibeh, not far from Cairo.

And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them in the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night—a miraculous guidance "that led the house of Israel through all their journeyings,"[1] "to show them the way they should go;"[2] and not "a whirlwind of sand, made into a cloud by the national pride of the people," according to one of the late "scientific writers" of this age.

Hitherto the Israelites had no definite route. Moses, it seems, had got out of reckoning "with the tides in the gulf," which, says one of those same critics, he had no doubt consulted.

This, as everybody knows, is an old story told anew,—but, honestly, can impudence or arrogancy go further in the face of what Scripture tells us and of common sense? For here, at Etham, the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, "Speak unto the children of Israel that they turn and encamp before Pi-hahiroth," a place of rank green herbage, possibly the present Adjerūd, between Migdol—a watch-tower also possibly at the opening towards the Red Sea of the Vale of Rameses, over against Baal-Zephon,—"before it shall they encamp by the sea."

The Lord then made them "turn,"—not back to Egypt assuredly, neither towards the land of the Philistines, nor yet through that of the Amalekites on the other side of the sea,—but in a south-easterly direction seawards, in the desert of Egypt; for, said God, Pharaoh will think they are entangled and shut in in the wilderness, and he will pursue after them,

[1] Ex. xii. 36. [2] Deut. i. 33; Heb. ix. 12–19.

and "I will be honoured upon Pharaoh and upon his hosts, that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord. And they did so."

III.

While they were encamped here, and awaiting further orders of march, or the rising and guidance of the cloud, it was told Pharaoh that the Israelites had fled. They were then both farther and in another direction than they should have been had they followed his orders to go three days' journey into the wilderness to hold a feast unto the Lord. Or Pharaoh, in a fit of hardness and of stupidity of heart, must have forgotten his former leave to them, and thus rushed to his own destruction. He then made ready his chariot and took his people with him, and six hundred chariots—chariots of Egypt—and captains over every one of them, and he pursued after the children of Israel, and overtook them encamping by the sea beside Pi-hahiroth, before Baal-Zephon. He came up to them with flying banners and prancing horses, with a shout of war, about to make sure of his prey. Back they could not go, he hedged them in; and forward spread the sea, and through it they could not walk. Their bondage was hard; but now their end would be worse than their beginning, when they were only once more brought back to the quarries and to the brick-fields.

So thought Pharaoh, and so also thought the people; for when they saw the army of the Egyptians coming after them they were greatly afraid, and murmured against Moses, saying, "Because there were no graves in Egypt hast thou taken us to die in the wilderness?

For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness."[1]

"And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not; stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will show you to-day; for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day ye shall see them no more for ever." The children of Israel had not placed themselves through rashness in the strait in which they were; they had followed the leading of the cloud, and the word of the Lord; they were then safe, however much they might be tried ere they saw their deliverance wrought out for them; "in quietness and confidence, therefore, was their strength." "The Lord," said Moses, "shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace." He is for you; who, then, can be against you? Only trust Him; wait and see; you will find Him better to you than all your fears.

"And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them," "the angel of the Lord that encampeth round about them that fear Him and delivereth them;"[2] "and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them. And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and a darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these, so that the one came not near the other all the night."[3]

The people of God soon "tasted that the Lord is good, and that blessed are they that put their trust in Him," when they saw the cloud that led the van now become their rearguard; a cloud of darkness over the host of their foes, but a pillar of light shining over

[1] Ex. xiv. 10. [2] Ps. xxxiv. 7. [3] Ex. xiv. 19-20.

them ; so that the Egyptians, who reckoned on making themselves once more masters of their runaway slaves as they thought, could not stretch their hands to touch them even when within their reach.

But the contrast between the darkness that brooded over the Egyptians and the light that shone by night over the children of Israel, was not greater than the blind ignorance of the Egyptian king of what was actually taking place around him, and of the fate that awaited his stolid unconsciousness of the part he was made to act—thinking himself all the while master of himself and of his host.

He figures as the enemies of the Church of Christ often also do. They plot, they plan against her in the fulness of their conceit ; they look upon her as their slave, or at least as their servant, who is to bow to their beck and blindly to yield to their behest,—all the while being themselves as stolid and as unconscious as was Pharaoh, of what the Church really is, of Him at whose word she moves, and under whose banners she fights. If only she be faithful —if only she be true to the word by which she pledged herself in Sacrament to the Captain of her salvation—she need not fear, but may stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, Who then will fight for her while she holds her peace. For against the Church of Christ, of "Him That loved her and gave Himself for her," no weapon that is formed shall ever prosper ;" no, "not even the gates of hell shall prevail against her," since "He Who loved her from everlasting, and Who redeemed her at the price of His precious blood, holds the keys of hell and of death." He is now the same as when He fought for

His people—"the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever,"—and although the Egyptian host of principalities, of powers, of the rulers of the darkness of this world be at hand, why should she fear? If the Church have a good conscience that she is faithful to her Lord, she may then stand still in quietness and confidence and see the deliverance He works for her.

But is she faithful, united, earnest, devoted, and active?—is she led and guided by God, or does she not often follow after her own vain imaginations, shadows and fancies, and not holding the Head? If she has brought herself into a strait through her negligence, her dissensions, her schism, her carelessness, and her want of life—then, indeed, can she have neither quietness, confidence, nor strength; for then it is not the Lord, but she alone that fights.

Not so with Israel. Although in ignorance of the Lord Who led them, and Whose name they had even forgotten in Egypt, they murmured against Moses as if he were responsible for their departure from Rameses—they nevertheless obeyed. "Wherefore criest thou unto Me?" said the Lord unto Moses. "Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward." Whither?—the broad sheet of waters stretched before them far on the left, and yet farther on the right, and the Egyptians pressed them in the rear. Now, then, should they see the deliverance of the Lord, Who, having brought them out of their house of bondage, was pledged by His promise and by the honour of His great Name not to let them perish in the wilderness. For they were children of the faithful Abraham, His friend, to whom He had promised He should bring them out of the land of

their affliction and lead them to the good land He had sworn to give them after making them His people by a sacramental rite, and constituting them a nation with Him at the head, their King and their God.

IV.

"Moses then stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground, and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left."[1]

That was the Lord's deliverance. When human means failed, and all hope of rescue from danger and from death seemed altogether lost, He made a way of escape for His people. He commanded the wind and the sea, which obey Him, and they hearkened to His word then, as they did afterwards at the fords of Jordan and on the lake of Gennesareth.

He made use of His own instruments; He "Who maketh His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire," and "Who stays His rough wind in the day of the east wind," "Who gave the sea His decree that the waters should not pass His commandment,"[2] who nevertheless "at His rebuke drieth it up,"[3] and "maketh it dry land"[4]—"He caused the sea to go back" north and south, "by a strong east wind all that night." No other wind could have wrought the same work and cleft the sea, or ploughed a way through it, by blowing athwart the length thereof, until "the waters were divided;" and by no other natural means could they have been divided.

[1] Ex. xiv. 21–22. [2] Prov. viii. 29. [3] Is. l. 2. [4] Ps. lxvi. 6.

Moses, indeed, might have been commanded to smite them as he smote the rock in Horeb, as Elisha smote the waters of Jordan; or the waters of the sea might have retreated hither and thither at God's behest when the first Israelite wetted the sole of his foot in the flowing tide, as they did before the conquering host of Joshua; but none of these means would serve. The waters through which the children of Israel were to pass, and in which they were to be baptized unto Moses and thus be made God's people and "His church in the wilderness," must be parted, hallowed, and blessed by the breath of morn, by the wind blowing from the east, from the regions of light, from the land of promise, whither God was leading His people.

So it is with the wind from Heaven, the Spirit from on high, that breathes over the waters wherein the redeemed of Christ are made His on their way to the city they seek—the New Jerusalem in the Canaan above; yea, even though they murmur against God in their journey through the wilderness of this world, and come short of that good land which He has promised them.

Moreover, no other wind than the east wind could have divided the waters so as to raise them on a heap, "like water-skins;" so as to make them "a wall unto the children of Israel on their right hand and on their left." God's people must have been "buried by baptism unto death," unto Egypt; but this could only be by the waters rising on either side above the heads of the marching host of six hundred thousand and more men. The sea they crossed lay almost due north and south; therefore, had the wind blown from the north it would have pushed the waters in a

southerly direction; and even supposing they had been "heaped up" it could only have been on one side, and thus the waters would have been a wall on the right side only. The same would have happened had the wind blown from the south; the heap of waters would have only been on the left of the people.

But a violent east wind blowing athwart the sea on one particular spot one mile broad, would, of course, cleave the waters, and, as it were, plough a passage through them; and the waters thus acted upon on one spot only would naturally be made to retreat on the right-hand and on the left in two heaps or walls, and leave the middle ford dry. The miracle lay in the extraordinary result of natural means used by God as instruments of His will; and He wrought it, we see, for a very plain purpose, which was, to constitute the people of Israel His people, "His Church in the wilderness," as S. Stephen calls it, by "an ensample," by a rite that pointed at once to the time when there would be no more shadows of the law; by a rite of more avail, fuller and holier than that of circumcision,—even by the same rite that severs His Church at present from the world, and is a pledge to her of the kingdom of Heaven.

"One body, then, and one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in us all."[1]

This "ensample," therefore, is plain; this shadow of good things to come has, indeed, a distinct outline for every one that will see. Every step in this wonderful rescue, and in this yet more wonderful

[1] Eph. iv. 4–6.

passage through the deep waters of the sea, was so evidently taken under God's control, so definitely marked out by Him, and by Him brought to pass, that, except we wilfully shut our eyes to such signs, we must see them. What, then, are we to think of those who, in order to deny this miracle, and to reduce it to "a simple natural phenomenon," shrink not from exposing their—in some of them it cannot be ignorance; what, then, is it—dishonesty? The question was started by disbelievers in the Bible in the last century, was lately revived, and is now still in these days "of knowledge" broached by smaller writers, who follow in the train of their leaders, and take everything for granted without taking the trouble to inquire for themselves. And this is the kind of reasoning by which they arrive at their conclusions—a reasoning that gives no great idea of the logic or of the lore of such men:—

They find that the Hebrew term *qādīm*—"east" or "east wind," is never rendered "east wind" by the Septuagint when that word is meant for the "east wind," but that it is then always rendered either "south" or "southerly wind," "burning," "hot," "blighting," "violent," "strong wind," etc., yet never "east wind;" therefore, say they, *qādīm*, in Hebrew, means "strong," "hot," "south," etc., and need not be rendered "east." We, then, have the amusing, if not the ridiculous sight, of one of these men, who passed for a very great scholar, telling us that "east wind" in this place "is a mistake," and that, instead, it should have been "south wind;" while one of his disciples stoutly declares it must have been a "northerly wind"! Anything, so that it be not "east."

And yet, whoever will take up the map, look at it, and make use of his reason, will see that the coast of Palestine runs north and south, but that the Egyptian shore on the Mediterranean—"the great sea" or "great basin," both in Hebrew and in hieroglyphics, as being the largest sea in those parts—lies east and west. He will also see that the Red Sea, that runs nearly parallel with the Nile, is comparatively narrow, and that its two northern gulfs are narrower still.

He will therefore conclude at once that the principal currents of air, or winds, cannot possibly blow from the same quarters in Palestine and in Egypt; but that in Palestine, with the sea in the west and deserts on the east, the prevailing and most violent winds will be east and west; and unhealthy from the desert, cool and welcome from the west; while in Egypt, especially in Lower Egypt, the prevailing winds will be north and south; but also that, owing to the neighbourhood of the Red Sea, and to the peninsula of Sinai, the currents of air in that part of Egypt will occasionally be further disturbed.

And it is what does actually take place. We find that in Egypt the "sea wind," or "north wind," blows from the Mediterranean at a stated season of the year, and is on that account called the "Etesian wind," agreeable and welcome,—"the sweet north wind" as it is called in hieroglyphic inscriptions; the gift of Apis at Memphis and of Osiris at Thebes; whereas the south, south-east, and south-west winds are so dreadful and injurious in their effects as to have been, from olden time, associated with the ideas of the giant serpent, the "burning Apap, enemy of the gods," and in later days with that of Typho and of

his consort Thueris. While the "east wind," properly so called in Egypt, but especially in Lower Egypt, is so agreeable, so mild, and so beneficial to health, that, as we have seen, cities and houses were and are yet built with a view to the enjoyment of it.

On the other hand, the effects of the east wind in Palestine, blowing, as it does, over the hot deserts of Arabia, and tempered by no sea, are precisely similar to those of the south wind in Egypt blowing from the African deserts. While the east wind in Egypt is cool and healthy, in Palestine it is looked upon as the south wind is in Egypt, as a dreadful scourge; blighting, killing, and destroying property and life wherever it blows, as I can testify from my own experience both in Egypt and in Palestine.

Whether the Septuagint was made from the Hebrew or from the Targum, matters not in this case; suffice it to say that it was made by Alexandrian Jews, for Jews living in Egypt, for whose sake, therefore, they were to render the original Hebrew that came from Palestine, where certain winds prevail, into a language, and in terms to be understood by everybody in Egypt where these same winds do not prevail, and have not the same effects when they actually do blow. If, therefore, they had rendered the Hebrew "blighted by the east wind" said of the ears of corn in Pharaoh's dream, by the same terms their translation could not have been understood by the common people, who were accustomed to see the east wind not "blight" plants, but help them to grow. Likewise, when the "east wind," in Hebrew, is spoken of as hot, strong, and withering, they could not have said that of the east wind, which, in Egypt, is

cool, soft, and agreeable, but they must have rendered those terms by the corresponding effects of the south wind. So that the Jewish translators were obliged to render the effects of the east wind in Palestine, by those of the south wind in Egypt, so as to be understood there.

These opposite natural phenomena, however, which have existed since the coasts of Palestine and of Egypt were marked out by the hand of God, giving the sea His commandment that it should not pass,—are either ignored or set aside by men who, in order, if possible, to gainsay the truth of Scripture, and to deny miracles—such a miracle, too, as this—argue, that since the Jews of Alexandria rendered "east wind" by "south wind;" therefore, "east" means "south," "hot" or "strong;" and that, therefore, in this case, it could not be an east wind, but that it must have been a strong wind from either north or south, which, acting upon the ebbing tide, laid bare the bottom of the sea, on which the children of Israel passed. Moses, they say, knew the time of the neap tide—he must, no doubt, have suddenly bethought himself of it when he "turned" from Etham to encamp by the sea!—and, although such historians admit that the effect of the north wind acting upon the tide would be felt as far as the Straits of Bab-el-mandeb, that is in the whole length of the Red Sea, yet that such a "disturbance of natural causes" would be less than the suspension of the ebb or flow in the small Gulf of Heroopolis during the few hours it took Israel to cross it.

However painful it be to hear such pitiable lore gravely propounded by writers who give themselves

for teachers and lights of the people, it is yet a relief to see an impartial scholar, of world-wide celebrity, under no religious bias whatever, but who, reasoning from his intimate knowledge of the subject he handles—yet, strange to say, still overlooking the difference between the winds of the two countries, says, "People have sought to explain the passage of the Red Sea by natural causes, but both logic and science prove a divine interposition :—1. It was impossible that the tide alone should lay bare the bottom of the sea. 2. The Hebrews, who lived so near the sea, must have known the times of the tides, and would not have murmured against Moses, had the tide then been favourable to their crossing. 3. The Egyptians, who also must have known these tides, would not have pursued after the Israelites, especially as they might have turned the gulf and have awaited them on the other side. For they would have known that the Israelites would escape across the sea at low water. 5. If the tide had sufficed, God would not have caused the wind to blow. The wind would have happened at the hour of the lowest ebb, and not when Moses stretched forth his hand across the sea; and the waters would have retired equally, and not in two enormous heaps. No; every man of good faith, who will examine with a scrupulous impartiality the facts stated, will be obliged to confess that the narrative of Moses not only implies a miracle, but a very striking one indeed."[1]

Yet it is humiliating to have to argue such a point, and to reply to the absurd assumptions of such men.

[1] M. Quatremère, Mém. sur le lieu où les Israélites passèrent la Mer Rouge; in Mém. des Inscr. et Belles-Lettres, vol. xix. p. 46, 1851.

As M. Quatremère says truly, "good faith" alone, in other words, an honest inquiry into the matter is all that is required in order to understand it. It is, however, precisely this good faith and honesty that are so sadly wanting among the Janneses and Jambreses of modern days, who have not improved on their grandsires. And as regards teachers of the law, who, from ignorance only, "understand neither what they say nor whereof they affirm," one would, at any time, help them to know better, and, with charity, cover their lack of knowledge, "in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves" honestly, and from ignorance only—but charity, which is neither deaf nor blind, is at a loss to know how to deal with men who wilfully and deliberately resist the truth; men of corrupt minds, and either reprobate, or of no judgment concerning the faith."[1]

V.

Whatever they may say, then, and in spite of it, the children of Israel did pass through the sea that was rent asunder by the agency of the east wind, which, being in Egypt always "soft and favourable," as Arabic writers describe it, was then made "strong," by God's will, on that special occasion. "And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And it came to pass that in the morning watch, the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians, through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, and took off their chariot wheels that they drave them

[1] Tit. iii. 16.

heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians."—Something, we are told, like Alexander the Great crossing the Pamphylian sea! Why not, at once, like fishers' carts crossing the Solway Frith at low water?

"And the Lord said unto Moses, stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them." But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right-hand and on their left.

"Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hands of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea-shore. And Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians, and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and His servant Moses."

What a night—while the stormy wind from the east battled with the tide until it had the mastery over it, and had cloven a passage through the deep for the people of God! and what a dawn, when light faintly glimmered over the Egyptian army, dismayed, overthrown, and struggling in vain with the surging flood that overwhelmed them!

But the morn! when the eastern horizon began to redden, and the first rays of the rising sun peered above the hills of Amalek, and, streaming over the sea, glittered in the spray of the deep blue waves that roared over the Egyptian host, partly dead and partly writhing in the last agonies of despair!—There stood Israel, amazed, astonished at the sight, exhausted perhaps, and faint after such night watches, but rescued, delivered from the last convulsive grasp of his foe, saved from the very jaws of death—and thankful!—Well might Moses and the children of Israel burst forth into songs of thanksgivings and say, "The Lord is my strength and song. He is become my salvation. Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O Lord, has dashed in pieces the enemy. Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like unto Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?

"Thou, in Thy mercy, hast led forth the people which Thou hast redeemed: Thou hast guided them, in thy strength, unto Thy holy habitation. Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance; in the place, O Lord, which Thou hast made for Thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have established. The Lord shall reign for ever and ever."[1]

[1] So marvellous a deliverance could not take place without leaving some faint traces in tradition. Accordingly, Manetho, Artapanus, Josephus, and others, have left us their accounts of the matter, which it would be out of place to discuss here. Yet we fain would discover, on existing Egyptian monuments, some traces of it; but it is not likely we shall, at least in inscriptions engraved on public buildings. The Egyptians were wont to record only their victories, and not their

So sang Israel, when made free for ever from the house of bondage, and severed from it and saved, through the same waters that swallowed up His enemies, and now, by this awful rite—"baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea"—formally made the people or church of God.

So, also, sings the Church of Christ, brought out of the world, and saved from death through the waters that rescue those who walk in faith and love for Him in Whom, and through Whom alone, those waters avail—that sever them for ever from the thraldom of death, and open for them a way to the kingdom of God.

And then, as now, also, the blood of the Lamb without blemish saved from death those over whom it was sprinkled, and who confirmed their covenant with God through the blood of that Lamb, by eating His flesh—in haste, and with their loins girded, and as wayfaring men ready to depart.

What else was that than the Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, as of the Lamb without blemish, and without spot, Who was slain, and Whose precious

defeats; their conquests of foreign lands, as by the Thothmes; their expeditions and treaties of peace with subdued enemies like the Chetas, as by the Ramses; but they would not hand down, in public documents, such a calamity as happened to them at the passage of the Red Sea, that is called, in their sacred books, "the tank of Punt," where all the foes of Egypt were wont to perish.

Some people have, of late, asserted that it is nowhere said that Pharaoh himself perished in the sea. It is, however, difficult to compare ch. xiv. v. 17, 18, with 28, where it is stated that "there remained not so much as one of them," without concluding that Pharaoh himself was of the number; especially as in Ps. cxxxvi. 15, we are expressly told that "God overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea."

blood was shed as the price paid for the redemption of His Church? Truly, as the holy Apostle wrote to the Corinthians, "These things happened to them for ensamples,[1] and they are written, for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore, let him that standeth take heed lest he fall."[2]

The Church of God now stood on the threshold of the wilderness, and at the entrance of her journey therein, dead unto Egypt, set apart unto Him from the world, by the waters of Baptism, and pledged to His service by the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of the Lamb without blemish, that were broken and shed for her.

These two Sacraments were then already for Israel, the one a pledge, and the other a seal of "the righteousness which is by faith" in the merits of Christ,—merits imputed to Abraham, and ratified to his children as having been promised to the Church of the living God, even before the foundation of the world.

[1] Or types. [2] 1 Cor. x. 11.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WILDERNESS; THE BREAD FROM HEAVEN, AND THE WATER FROM THE ROCK.

Israel is rescued—dead unto Egypt, and living unto God. The same waters that opened to let him pass, are now closed behind him and forbid his return to the house of bondage. He is free, though yet servant of the Lord, Who is about to set him laws and commandments, and to lead him by a way he knew not, to the land He promised his fathers to give them. Instead of the smiling meadows and of the green banks of the Nile, where Israel was wont to dwell, and where, even in the midst of toil, he lived in abundance, he now saw before him the parched soil and barren hills of Shur, a wilderness wherein trials and privations awaited him on his untrodden path. But the Lord, Whose servant he was, would go with him, would show him the way wherein he should walk; and, at the last, His presence would give him rest.

Onwards, then, went the people, for three days, across the sandy plain, into the passes and narrow

valleys of the rugged outline of hills that fringed heaven in the distance. But here, albeit the scanty provisions brought from Egypt had not yet failed, the people found no water. And when they came further on to Marah, the water there was so bitter that, in sight of it, they could not drink it. One must have suffered thirst under the brazen sky of the desert, and come hot and faint to the well, bring the water to the lips, and then thrust it from them in disgust, to understand the disappointment of the people at Marah.

Moses and Aaron, with Joshua, Caleb, and others, had faith in God's promise, and in His leading, but the mass of the people only lived unto the day, following their leader, and allured by temporal promises and temporal blessings. They, therefore, always contrasted their life of plenty in Egypt, with their wanderings in this desolate wilderness, and therefore did they murmur again here at Marah, and asked Moses, What shall we drink? And the Lord showed Moses a tree, which, when he had cast into the waters, made them sweet, and the people drank of them. And there the Lord proved them, and told them that as He had healed the waters, so, also, would He heal them, and put upon them none of the diseases which He had brought upon the Egyptians, if only they would diligently hearken to the voice of Him the Lord their God, and do that which is right in His sight.

This was the first statute and ordinance He gave them at their entrance into the wilderness, and, ere He defined more exactly what is right in His sight by the laws and ordinances which He afterwards gave them. But as they were led and governed by visible

tokens of God's power and of His rule, He thus taught them, at the outset, how He could turn the bitterness of their bondage in Egypt into the sweetness of service to Him; and how, with him as their Lord, and their God, they could want no good thing, in the midst of that howling wilderness; but that, under His look, it would blossom as a garden of herbs.

Thence they passed on to Elim, and encamped by the wells and the palm-trees there—that still mark the spot—and afterwards, in the second month after their departure from Egypt, they entered the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai.

It was the middle of May, when the sun darts his almost vertical rays in the narrow valleys of that wilderness, dazzling the eyes with the hot, quivering glare of the white sand, and making life endurable only as the prophet says, "In the shadow of a great rock"—in the dark blue shade cast by one of those majestic piles that frown upon the valley beneath, where not a blade of green grass is to be seen; but, here and there, perhaps, a few stunted shrubs, which camels will hardly touch, and which asses disdain. By day, when not a sound is heard, when even the eagle will not leave his eyrie, nor the vulture his nest, and all nature is silent, and, as it were, panting for breath, then did the children of Israel again turn their thoughts towards the flesh-pots of Egypt, where they ate bread—and such bread, too—to the full. And there did they murmur against Moses, saying, Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in Egypt, and not die here of hunger!

But the Lord heard their complaint. He knew, as well as they, what their sufferings were; but He had

brought them hither, after all their provisions were consumed, and when all human means to preserve life would not avail, in order to work for them a miracle, that would make them know His power, and also make them feel their utter dependence on Him for support during their wanderings in the dry and barren wilderness. You have nothing to eat; but, said the Lord, "behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them whether they will walk in My law, or no.[1] I have heard their murmurings; at even, then, they shall eat flesh, and in the morning they shall be filled with bread; and they shall know that I am the Lord their God."

"And it came to pass, that at even the quails came up, and covered the camp, and, in the morning, the dew lay round about the host. And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness, there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost upon the ground. And when the children of Israel saw it, they said, one to another, What is this? for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat." "Six days shall ye gather it, but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none. See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore, He giveth you, on the sixth day, the bread of two days: abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. And the house of Israel called the name thereof Manna; and it was like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with

[1] Ex. xvi. 4, 12, *seq.*

honey. And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat manna, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan."[1]

Thus did the Lord God provide food, and thus did He support His people, when they could find no sustenance in the wilderness wherein they sojourned. He sent them bread from heaven. To feed, to support, to keep them in life? Yea, but more than that, to teach them if only they could have understood it—what, fifteen hundred years later, He told their children, who said to Him,[1]

"What sign showest Thou, then, that we may see and believe Thee?—what dost Thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert, as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

"Then He, JESUS, said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven: but My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world.

"Then said they unto Him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

"And He said unto them, I am the bread of life.

"Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die.

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread that I give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

[1] Ex. xvi. 12, 36. [2] S. John vi. 30, *seq.*

Here we must pause. There is not a stroke to be added to the ensample—not one word to the explanation of it. Could, however, any one believe that in the face of such a sign and of such fulfilment certain Christians (?) can bring themselves to say, as they do, that this "bread from heaven" was the juice of trees, and thus bid the children of Israel go every morning and gather it under the tamarisks of the desert! How, then, came it to pass that there was none on the seventh day? Did the trees cease to work and the insects to sting on the sixth? And what happened where no such trees grow, and in the season when the juice does not run? Then how could it last forty years? To this, one of the chief of those men, says "the forty years must be either a miracle or tradition."[1] We choose the former. It was a miracle, a daily, a monthly, yearly miracle, a plain ensample of "the spiritual meat,"[2] of which they all partook; a figure of Him who is the true bread from heaven, that giveth life unto the world. He said so Himself.

Then the children of Israel came to Rephidim; and there was no water for the people to drink. Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said, Why

[1] Gesenius, Thes. L. S., *s. v. mān.* He attempts to show that the words "bread from heaven" said of the manna is borrowed from the same expression used by Arabs for the juice of trees, which they gather at a certain season of the year. Which, then, of the two came first, the words of the Exodus or the common idiom of native Arabs of the present and of the past generation? But there is another precisely parallel case,—that of a certain wine with a blasphemous name; which was first, that wine or the throes of grief that wrung the name thus impiously given? Where is honesty—no more—among such critics?

[2] 1 Cor. x. 4.

chide ye with me? Wherefore do ye tempt the Lord?

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee the elders of Israel, and thy rod wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand and go. Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel, "and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also."[1]

"Brethren," says S. Paul, "I would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were under the cloud and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.

"And did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that went with them, and that Rock was Christ."[2]

"He is the Rock," said Moses, "His work is perfect; for all His ways are judgment—a God of truth and without iniquity; just and right is He."

"But they forsook God who made them, and lightly esteemed the Rock of their Salvation,"[3] Who fraught them at their entrance into the wilderness with bread from heaven and with water from the rock —not only as tokens of His daily care for them, but also as emblems of Him Who is the True Bread from Heaven, and of the Well of water which, in Him, springs up for us into everlasting life.

[1] Ex. xvii. 1–7; Numb. xx. 12, 13. [2] 1 Cor. x. 1–4.
[3] Deut. xxxii. 4–15.

CHAPTER VII.

MOUNT SINAI AND THE LAW.

I.

HERE, in Rephidim, the sons of Amalek, who seemed to have inherited their grandsire's hatred of his younger brother, came to dispute the passage of the wilderness with the children of Israel. Moses then sent Joshua to fight these Edomites, while he stood on the hill in sight of the battle with the rod of God in his hand—that made Israel overcome when it was raised; wherefore Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands until the going down of the sun, when Amalek was discomfited. The children of him who had despised his birthright could make no friendship—albeit of the same kindred—which the children that were heirs to the promise; whether regret, remorse, jealousy, or hatred swayed them or not, the enemies of the people of God, were God's enemies; and as such Amalek was doomed. There did Moses rear an altar which he called Jehovah-nissi, "the Lord my banner," because he had defeated Amalek in the strength of the Lord and with His help.

Here also did Jethro meet Moses and bring him his wife and his two sons Gershom and Eliezer, whom he had sent back to Midian from Egypt; and here also did he give Moses the good advice to decide the work of administering justice to the people by appointing rulers of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens that should decide smaller matters and refer to him only the most important.

Then on the third month after their departure out of Egypt came the children of Israel to the wilderness of Sinai, and there they encamped before the mount. By degrees had they been thus brought to the footstool of God's throne, the highest of the mountains of that desert, whence He as King and God would give His law to His people, and formally establish the Theocracy. As he stood to them in this twofold character, and ruled them accordingly, it was meet that He should enact laws and give decrees as God and as King, and that the first character being superior to the second, the first law given should be the expression of His will which is holy, just, and good, and right in itself—that is, God's moral law; the law or laws of an everlasting kingdom, of which this was a figure, and in which the fulfilment of the shadows in the Church of Christ belong to her whole and perfect state in heaven.

"Ye have seen," said He to the people, ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings,"—eagles were then soaring above the rocks of Sinai—"and brought you unto myself. Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the

earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation."

This was, indeed, a high calling, "priests of God and of Christ," "of the Lamb who hath made us unto our God kings and priests to reign for ever." Of Him "that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, unto whom be dominion for ever and ever, amen."[1] A high calling truly; nay, the highest; foreshadowed, then, in the wilderness on the eve of the thunders and lightnings that shook the mount, and of the voice of a trumpet that made Israel tremble; but now whispered in the softest accents of love through Him "Who is our peace," and Who, though a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence unto them that are disobedient," is, nevertheless, "precious unto them that believe, and who in Him are made a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that they should show forth the praises of Him Who hath called them out of darkness unto His marvellous light."[2]

For as there is one body, one Spirit, one Lord, one Faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, and one hope of our calling to the one and the same kingdom, so there is also one law—in outline, in details, in form, of the time in which it was given. But in spirit—as there is one Spirit and one God and Father of all "Who is Spirit," so also in spirit is that law one, and the same for the shadows of the law and for the body which is of Christ; since we, of the Church of Christ, and no longer under the law, pray in the service we offer to the Lamb without blemish who was

[1] Rev. xx. 6, v. 10, i. 6. [2] 1 Pet. ii. 9.

slain for us, in memory of that His precious sacrifice, that He will write in our hearts and enable us to keep the law given from Sinai to the people sacred to Him by the blood of the paschal lamb and by the waters of the Red Sea.

II.

Moses had gone up to the Mount to receive God's orders; and God sent him down to bid the people hold themselves ready against the third day; when they should keep at a distance, and not even let a beast touch the mountain on which God's Majesty rested. "And on the third day in the morning there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of a trumpet exceeding loud: so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount."

And God spake all these words, saying,

"I am the Lord thy God which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

"Thou shalt have no other gods before Me."

Ever and anon is Israel reminded both of his bondage, and of the power that delivered him from it,—and to which he was now bound to yield. The children of Israel had been accustomed to hear things in heaven, the sun, the moon, and certain stars, and heaven itself, called gods; and likewise to see things on earth, the river, the fishes and monsters thereof, kine, domestic animals, birds, and even creeping things, worshipped and adored as divine by their masters, a people that boasted of being the wisest on

earth. The first order, then, given is that as there is, so there could be for them no other God but He Who says of Himself, "I AM THAT I AM." To Him ought Israel henceforth to bow, and Him alone to serve. For He reigns supreme throughout His dominions.

And we of the Church of Christ? Even in heaven she ceases not day and night to say in her songs of thanksgivings, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come; Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created."[1] And on earth? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind." This is the first and great commandment,[2] says the Lord Himself —great when given, great ever since, and great for evēr. A commandment, the keeping of which is whispered by the Apostle in these words, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen."[3]

"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of things in heaven, in the earth, or under the earth,—thou shalt not bow down to them nor serve them, for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God."

Of things "in heaven," Israel was familiar with the figures of Ra, the sun rising above the horizon, of Cheper, the sun at noon as vivifier and creator of all things, of Osiris as personifying the sun and the Deity in general; of Isis as the moon, of Sothis the dog-star, sacred to her, and of other stars; and of heaven or Nut, on which the sun was represented in Egyptian paintings as sailing in his bark, rowed by his

[1] Rev. iv. 8, 10. [2] S. Matt. xxii. 37, 38. [3] 1 S. John v. 21.

attendants. Of images of things "in the earth," the temples and houses of Egypt were also full, as of things under the earth—of all that was done in the realms of Atum the sun of the night, on the plains of Hatapham, and in the fields of Aalu, in Amenti; of the progress of the soul there, of the billet of wood it had to escape, of the tank of fire it had to avoid, of the crown of righteousness it had to win, and of the halls of Osiris it had to reach after having undergone certain transformations,—all these and other such things were the Israelites accustomed to see, as we ourselves do, represented in the tombs, in the houses, and in the funeral rituals of Egypt—and to these did they see the Egyptians bow in worship and offer songs of praise.

But the gods of Egypt were not even to be mentioned by God's people, and since "God is Spirit," no likeness of Him was allowed; neither is it allowed in the Church of Christ. Likenesses of Him Who took upon Him the form of a servant, and Who was made like unto us in all things except sin, are indeed allowable, and are a comfort to us; but of Him who is Spirit no likeness is possible, and none is allowed, for "to whom will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto Him?"[1] But in truth the figure of every idol of the heart is a graven image of that object of worship; for whatever we love more than God is an idol, and to it we bow. Yet He is a jealous God, and a consuming fire; He will not give His honour to another, and cares not for the heart that is only half given to Him.

Likewise were the Israelites forbidden to take the

[1] Is. x. 4, 18.

name of God in vain, as were the names of other gods. Neither dare we, who are taught by the Son Himself to say, HALLOWED BE THY NAME, and to pray that His will be done among us as it is in heaven," where His angels around His throne veil their faces in awe at His presence, where they mention His name in whispers of profound worship, and where, as on earth, is every knee to bow at the name of JESUS.

Those three commandments referred expressly to God alone, as God and King eternal, invisible, of heaven, of earth, and in it, of Israel.

The next commandment that relates to the Sabbath had a twofold object; first—as regards God's kingdom it was a figure "of the rest that remaineth for the people of God;" of the eternal Sabbath His Church will spend in Heaven, when her warfare is accomplished and she then rests for ever, happy and glorious in Him and with Him in the realms of His unfading light; and, secondly—the Sabbath was intended to remind the children of Israel, as God's servants, of the day on which He rested from His works, and also of their own bondage in Egypt, from which they now were free. For their haughty and stiff-necked disposition was ever and anon made to remember they had been slaves and were now servants. Therefore did the appointment of the seventh day especially concern the Jews alone, as slaves set free and as servants of a Lord Who was present among them, and Who led them by visible tokens of His rule as their temporal sovereign.

But, as the same reason no longer attaches to those whom Christ, Who is the end of the law to every one that believeth," has made free from the thraldom

of death, His Church keeps holy His day, the day on which He rested from the work of her redemption, brake open the prison-gates of the grave, and proclaimed to heaven and earth, that as He had life in Himself, and gave it to whomsoever He will, so also was His Church now "free indeed" from the bondage of sin and death. But in either case, the feast was and is kept holy unto the Lord, both as a memorial of the past and as a figure of what is to come, when His whole family, which on earth and in heaven is named, shall then spend one eternal Lord's day with Him in His kingdom above.

The following six commandments of God's moral law refer more particularly to man as God's creature and property; thus imposing relative duties between man and man, that rest on man being not his own but God's; and that, so to speak, thus include the second table in the first, or rather make it dependent on it.

Thus the duties of honour to parents rest not only on the instinctive relation between the offspring and the parent, which we even see to a certain extent in brute beasts, but the fifth commandment rests (1) on the duty a son owes his father and mother, as the means whereby he becomes God's creature, with duties incumbent upon him as such; (2) on the relationship of fear, love, and honour, that ought to exist between a child and his parents, a figure often mentioned of the like duties of man towards God his Heavenly Father. Therefore is the fifth commandment the root of all social combination and order, the foundation of civil states, as, for instance, in China; therefore also is it the first commandment with promise of temporal reward for the observance of it—but also of curse in

the breach thereof. If the days of the child who honours his father and mother be long and blessed, those of him who dishonours them are short and evil; nay "the eye," says God, "that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it."[1] And so it has always been.

So with the next commandment, "Thou shalt do no murder." In this, as in all others, God shows us that He looks for the observance of the commandment both in the letter and in the spirit; and thus warns us that in His eyes "he that hateth his brother is a murderer," because hatred is opposed to Him Who is love.[2] But the actual shedding of man's blood by man is forbidden on the ground that man is not his own property, but God's; and that his life belongs to Him Who made man after His own image and similitude. Therefore was death made the penalty for murder when the command and blessing were given, "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth;" an order given assuredly not to the Jews alone, but to the whole race of man, with which, therefore, life for life holds good everywhere. Man's life being God's own property, a man has no power over it: if he commit suicide, he is *felo de se*, robbing God of what is His; but if a man commit murder, he commits a two-fold crime,—he robs a man of what God gave him, and robs God of what belongs to Him. This is the real and only foundation on which to rest capital punishment for murder; and it is as much of divine appointment as the law by which man increases and multiplies "after the image and similitude of God,"

[1] Prov. xxx. 17. [2] 1 Joh. iii. 15.

and because he was so created. Therefore did God say at the very opening of the new world, and immediately after His blessing upon it, "And surely your blood of your lives will I require—at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man."[1] And when He gave the civil laws of His commonwealth, founded upon that first expression of His will, He says, "Ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall surely be put to death—So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are: for blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it."[2] In vain will the maudlin sentimentality of men ignorant of either the Bible, or of the real principles of political economy, try to set all this aside. And the State that tampers with this sentence, or abrogates it from some mistaken and, in any case, unsound motive, cannot do so without incurring God's displeasure on that account. But then, as also now, He provided an escape for him who was guilty of accidental manslaughter only, without malice aforethought.

So, again, as regards adultery. It was forbidden in order to prevent confusion and defilement of the spring from which, by God's will, mankind is increased after God's own image and similitude, that is, of the pair in the garden of Eden. Hence was the adulterer ranked with the murderer, than whom he still fares no better in many countries. If murder in the eyes of God destroys the life of His image in man, adultery

[1] Gen. ix. 5, 6. [2] Numb. xxxv. 31, 33.

—by which is understood all unlawful intercourse between man and woman—defiles the stream of that life, and is therefore equally hateful to God, and equally cursed of Him. And this has held, holds, and will hold good as long as the human race exists in the earth, as regards the letter of the Seventh Commandment.

But of the spirit thereof our Saviour said, "Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her committeth adultery with her already in his heart;"[1] and of this, not man but God is the judge. While the Apostle S. Paul, transferring the relative duties of husband and wife to the mystical union of Christ with His Church, explains elsewhere why He curses adultery in all its forms, and why He blesses no union between man and woman but the one sanctioned by Himself.

Thus, again, as regards the commandments against robbery, false witness and lying, and covetousness; they rest not only on principles of social order, but on the yet higher foundation of moral responsibility to God, Who "hates robbery" even "for sacrifice;" Who is "a God of truth," and has "lying lips in abomination," and Who, while saying that "covetousness is idolatry," teaches us also that to covet other men's goods is to feel dissatisfied with our lot and to murmur at it, and therefore to be thankless for the gifts we receive from God, Who owes us nothing, and from Whom we yet receive everything.

We, then, see clearly that the laws by which God ushered in His government as King of Israel, and

[1] S. Matt. v. 27, 28.

which He thundered from heaven, were not framed especially for Israel, as children of Abraham—since even the Fourth Commandment referred to an institution that dated from the creation of the world,—but that they were given as the expression either of God's will, of the order that reigns in His heavenly kingdom, or of principles, the right or wrong of which lies in Him and with Him, and not with man. By so doing God evidently undertook the government of Israel, as King of the whole earth, asserting His power and authority by laws that are true in Him, and also right and good for all men alike, thus treating the children of Israel with the favour of His special notice and care, but not as the only nation on earth; since the first laws given to the people of God are also good and true for others.

Whence we see, that in giving these two tables of the law, as the Charter of His Rule and the Code of His kingdom, God had other nations, and another and a better state of things, in view at the time. For in them He embraced a spiritual kingdom, wherein to love God supremely, and one's neighbour as oneself, is declared by Him to be the sum of the whole of His law; for "He Who is Spirit seeketh such as worship Him in spirit and in truth." Since then, no other service can satisfy the requirements of His kingdom, the mere outward observance of such laws could no more compensate for the moral guilt incurred by breaking them in spirit, than the blood of bulls and of calves, or the sprinkling of the ashes of an heifer, could possibly wipe off the taint of sin from the soul that offered them. In either case they all were but the shadow of a reality, of a body, of a substance

"which is of Christ." The consciousness of sin, the weight and burden of a conscience that felt guilty in spite of hecatombs offered in order to quiet it, the working of the law, in short—"for by law is the knowledge of sin"—drove, like, as it were, a schoolmaster, such consciences to Christ; Who was then, Who now "is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."[1]

"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit."[2]

And who is He Who thus "is the end of the law," —whether moral or ritual? He it is Who, the Holy Apostle tells us, "went with Israel in the wilderness," and of Whom God said unto Moses, "Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee unto the place which I have prepared. Beware of sin and obey His voice, provoke Him not: for He will not pardon your transgressions: for My name is in Him. But if thou shalt indeed obey His voice, and do all that I speak, then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries. For Mine Angel shall go before thee unto the land of the Amorites and of the Hittites—and I will cut them off. And ye shall serve the Lord your God, and He shall bless thy bread, and thy water: and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee."[3]

[1] Gal. iii. 24; Rom. x. 4. [2] Rom. viii. 3, 4.

[3] Ex. xxiii. 20, 33. Justin Martyr and Eusebius apply this to Joshua; but see note to following Chapter, p. 341.

Why such honour paid to that one Angel above all others by Him Who calls His archangels by name, and bids them fly at His behests; Whose legions of angels are but ministering spirits, whom He sends from the realms of light to wait on His beloved here on earth, or to ward them from danger? He Who afterwards said of this same Israel, "Surely they are My people, children that will not lie."—So He was their Saviour.—In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His presence saved them: in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old."[1]

That was the Angel of His presence, the leader of His hosts, at the quivering of Whose spear Satan and all the powers of hell tremble. What if He be one of those "through whom" the law was ordained in the hands of a mediator,[2] Moses? Who then "brought in the law that offence might abound; Who then said to His Church in the wilderness, This letter convicts thee of sin, and kills thee; but it brings thee to Me. I have loved thee with an everlasting love; I therefore will keep this law for thee; I am thy Saviour, and on Me thy sin shall be laid.—For "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."[3]

[1] Is. lxiii. 8. [2] Gal. iii. 19; Acts vii. 53. [3] Rom. v. 20, 21.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FIRST TABERNACLE: LAWS, RITES, AND ORDINANCES.

I.

In order not to break the thread of Israel's march through the wilderness, we had better here at once take a brief survey of the laws and ordinances God gave His people, and of the circumstances under which He did it, without, however, going into details that would be out of place in a work of this kind.

After giving the Ten Commandments, which embody the whole Law, and which were further reduced by Him Who fulfilled the Law for us, to the two principles of perfect love for God, and of duty to our neighbour, —God went, so to speak, into particular laws, statutes, and ordinances bearing on His twofold relation of God and King, to His people.

As God, He required, generally speaking, worship; a worship, too, offered under the peculiar circumstances of Israel at the time, just brought out of a heathen land, where he had seen, heard, and done many things during four hundred and thirty years' residence in it,

which he now was forbidden even to mention. The statutes, then, relating to the worship of God, had (1) a special reference to that past estate of the people, and, so far, were prohibitory of certain things said and done during that time; and (2) those statutes had respect to the time then present, when the Israelites should alone, among the other nations of the world, worship the only true God according to His supreme will and attributes,—therefore, also, according to certain outward forms and ceremonies that bare more or less on the real service of His spiritual and eternal kingdom. The ordinances, then, relating to the worship of God were both present and positive, the actual performance of the rites and ceremonies ordered—and figurative or typical of a future and better state of things; and also were they given with the wisdom, foresight, and authority of God alone.

No wonder then, if, while we can trace the outline of the most distinct of these shadows, we fail in understanding them all, and in all their details. We know that "the body of them is of Christ;" but we cannot always tell the way in which that relationship exists.

Secondly—God, as temporal king of His people, enforced obedience with the absolute right and authority He had over that people in His character of King, Who had redeemed them from a galling bondage with a high hand and a stretched-out arm, and with a wonderful display of His might in overcoming their enemies, whereby He won and purchased Israel to Himself as His own peculiar people. The civil laws and ordinances given to that people, then, would of necessity be framed not only as by an absolute sovereign, but also with regard to the special

character, wants, and circumstances of the children of Israel as a nation. Their hard heart, their stiff neck, their spiritual blindness, and their naturally wanton disposition would make certain specially stringent and burdensome statutes absolutely necessary if the nation were at all to be governed; and their absolute isolation as a nation from the rest of the world made other civil regulations equally binding.

Yet, inasmuch as God, while undertaking to rule them as temporal sovereign, was also King of a spiritual and eternal kingdom, we must expect to find in His civil rule of the people of Israel many features intended to point to that His other kingdom, and first to that part of it which is on earth, to the Church Militant, and from that, to the other part, to the Church triumphant and at rest in heaven. Yet here again we can trace the resemblance only in certain plain and broad features, that leave no doubt as to their connection with the subject to which they refer. But we cannot prudently venture on the application of details to their antitypes under the Gospel without risk of making very many mistakes.

II.

The worship of God was not, of course, performed anywhere and anyhow; the rites and ceremonies laid down by Him as part of the worship He would receive took place in His own dwelling, in the tent or tabernacle made after His own pattern and pitched among His people, which encamped around it wherever they halted during their wanderings in the wilderness. This tent was itself a figure of better things, and was divided into two parts. The first, in which

was the candlestick, and the table and the shewbread, was called the Sanctuary, or Holy Place; and the second part, behind the veil, was called the Holiest of All, or the Most Holy Place, which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was a golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; and over it the cherubims of glory, shadowing the mercy-seat."[1]

"Now, when these things were thus ordained," says S. Paul, "the priests went always into the first tabernacle,"—the Holy Place, or Sanctuary,—"accomplishing the service of God," which consisted chiefly in the morning and evening sacrifices of a lamb daily throughout the year, and in other sacrifices on the great Sabbath Days, such as the Passover, the Feast of Weeks, the Feast of Tabernacles, etc., and on other occasions stated, or dependent on circumstances connected with the whole people or with private individuals.

"But," adds the Holy Apostle, "in the second tabernacle or Most Holy Place went the High Priest alone every year"—on the great day of the Atonement—"not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people. The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way in the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing, which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices that could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience, which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation.

[1] Heb. ix. 1.

"But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building, neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"[1]

And for this cause is he the Mediator of the new covenant—"that by means of death for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." And since "almost all things are by law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission," the first covenant was not dedicated or sanctioned without blood, for Moses, after sprinkling with blood the book and the people, the tabernacle and the vessels of the ministry, said, This is the blood of the covenant which God hath enjoined unto you. "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figure of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear into the presence of God for us."[2]

So entirely were these things—"the tent that God pitched among men,"[3] the vessels, furniture, and

[1] Heb. ix. 1–14. [2] Heb. ix. 23. [3] Ps. lxxviii. 69.

service thereof, and the priests that ministered therein, "a figure," as the Holy Apostle says, "of the true," that is, of the heavenly counterpart of them, that "He Who also dwelt among us," but Who, more correctly, "pitched His tent among us,"[1] not being of the tribe of Levi, never went Himself into the Holiest of All while on earth, nor yet even perhaps into the Holy Place or sanctuary of the Temple, built after the model of the tabernacle. He so entirely dwelt on His own sacrifice about to be offered, on "the spiritual house and the holy priesthood" about to be established for spiritual sacrifices acceptable unto God through Him, and on the assembly of the first-born in heaven already made by Him kings and priests by virtue of His eternal unction after the order of Melchizedek—that He waited until He made His formal entrance into His own Holiest of all, into heaven, where He stands as our High Priest and Advocate at the right hand of the Mercy Seat, making intercession for us.

"For," continues S. Paul, "the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sin. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year; for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." They were a mere figure or emblem of the reality of the one great sacrifice of Christ; and therefore were they in themselves of no avail, unless they

[1] Ἐσκήνωσεν, S. John i. 14.

were offered with faith in the sacrifice they represented; but were of themselves, like the ordinances "of meat, of drink, of holy days, of new moons and Sabbath days," of "taste not, touch not, handle not, things which perish in the using," mere "rudiments of this world,"[1] "a shadow of things to come, the body of which is of Christ," Who—

"When coming into the world, saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me; in burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God. He thus taketh away the first sacrifice that he may establish the second."[2]

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him that appointed Him, as Moses was also faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after, but Christ as a Son over His own house; Whose house are we if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."[3]

"For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels, but He took on Him the seed of Abraham, wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people," having "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." "For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."

[1] Col. ii. 16–23. [2] Heb. x. 1–9. [3] Heb. iii. 1–7.

"Seeing, then, we have Him, our great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God,"—being made surety of a better covenant than that of Moses—"let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."[1]

"This is He," said S. Stephen, "of Whom Moses said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me: Him shall ye fear." This is He who was with the church in the wilderness; the Angel "which spake in the Mount Sina to Moses, who was with our fathers, who received the lively oracles to give unto us, to whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back again to Egypt, saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us; for as for this Moses, which brought us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him."[2]

Shadows, truly, naught but shadows; yet so plain as to show that the Sun Himself was at hand, and shone already, though still unseen.

[1] Heb. iv. 14-16. [2] Acts vii. 37, 38.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MOLTEN CALF, AND THE CONSEQUENCES THEREOF.

So quickly did they turn out of the way which the Lord had commanded them; so blind were they to His presence among them, and so hard to teach, that no sooner had the narrow mountain passes of Sinai and the glens of Horeb ceased to shake at the echoes of the thunders and of "the voices from heaven," than the gross people forgot their terror at the sight of the mountain that smoked and trembled, when God came down upon it to meet Moses and to give him His law. But they threatened Aaron to make them "gods that should go before them" after the fashion of those they had been accustomed to see carried or walking before the people in Egypt.

We can scarcely understand such stolid indifference to what had already happened to them during the short three months that had passed since they left the banks of the Nile. We fancy that had we beheld such wonders wrought before our eyes, had we seen the sea cleft in two to let us pass, and the rock split

asunder to make us drink, had we been fed from heaven, and had we trembled in abject fear at the thunders of Sinai, we could not have murmured or forgotten such wonders so soon as did Israel,—we might, at least, have waited longer ere we went back to our old ways, made ourselves other gods, and worshipped them. Yet, in reality, do God's mercies and wonderful dealings make deeper impression upon us? Do we not, the moment sickness, danger, or the fear of death is past, forget Him also as did Israel, even while they stood at his footstool on the threshold of His awful Judgment Hall?

So, then, did Israel. They drove Aaron to make them gods. What gods?—If Moses was learned in the wisdom of Egypt, Aaron, his elder brother, born three years before the cruel edict to cast all sons into the River, could not, at least, be ignorant of what he was made to witness every day. He chose a calf, but why a calf? Might it not be because Oer-Meri, or Mnevis, the calf or bullock of On, was said to be the "second or new life (incarnation) of Ra," the Sun, so that even while making the children of Israel a god as they wished, He made them one, at all events, symbolical of their new birth as the people of God? Before this view of it is called fanciful it should be studied, when it will be found that not only is the above epithet of the calf of On, the sacred City of Lower Egypt, incontestably true, but also that, possibly on this account the calf is, in hieroglyphics, the constant emblem and determinative of childhood, youth, and second birth, or incarnation.

And so ready were they to forget God, who had bought them, and to fall back into idolatry, that at

Aaron's behest they all, men and women, brought their golden rings, earrings, noserings, and other gold ornaments, and gave them to be broken, melted, and cast into "the figure of a calf that eateth hay;" and of it, said Aaron in mockery to the people, "These be thy gods, O Israel, that brought thee out of the land of Egypt." And before it they ate and drank and rose up to play; and this, too, while God looked down upon them from Mount Sinai.

He saw their doings, and said to Moses, "Get thee down, for the people have corrupted themselves, they have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. I have seen them, and, behold, it is a stiff-necked people. Now, therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them. But of thee I will make a great nation."[1]

Then Moses besought the Lord — Who is easily entreated—by His mercies, and the promises He had made to Abraham, Isaac, and to Jacob, to spare His people, and to bring it into the good land He had promised, lest the Egyptians should, after all, say, "For mischief did the Lord bring them out, to slay them in the mountains"—of that awful howling wilderness—and "consume them from the face of the earth."

And the Lord hearkened unto Moses, who then went down from the mountain, with the two tables of the testimony in his hand. The tables were written

[1] Ex. xxxii. 1, 10.

on both their sides, and they were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God graven upon the tables. And Joshua, Moses' servant—JESUS, obedient to the law for our sakes—who was with him, hearing the people shouting, said, "There is a noise of war in the camp. Nay, said Moses, The voice of singing do I hear."

But, as they drew near to the camp, and saw the calf and the dancing, "Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount.[1] He then came to the camp, and took the calf they had made, burnt it in the fire, ground it to powder, strewed it upon the water of the brook that came down from the mount, and made the children of Israel drink it."

In vain did Aaron try to excuse himself; he only showed that, in this instance, he was more afraid of the people than of God's judgment. But the sin must be punished. Moses then stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side? And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves unto him; he bade them gird every man his sword, pass through the camp and slay every man his fellow; and there fell, of the people, that day, about three thousand men.

And, on the morrow, Moses said to the people, Ye have sinned a great sin; but I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for you.

He, therefore, returned unto the Lord, and said,

[1] "God," says S. Athanasius (Quæst. ad Ant. 60), signifying thereby, the setting aside of the Old Law, or covenant, to make room for a new one.

"Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and made them gods of gold. Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin—and, if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written."

Moses felt that the slaughter, made by his order, was only man's judgment on the sin that was of a far deeper dye than to be thus expiated. The words, "Thou shalt have none other gods but Me:" and "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image to bow down to it," to serve it, yet rang in the people's ears, when that people made themselves, with a graving tool, the likeness "of a calf that eateth hay," and worshipped it; and, by so doing, committed a twofold sin and transgression, both of God's moral law, and of His order as their King.

They had, in fact, transgressed morally and civilly; and even if Moses' chastisement of three thousand slain had been sufficient as a deodand on the people, there yet remained the transgression of God's moral law to be expiated,—not, indeed, by man's estimate of the offence, but according to God's own judgment of it, and by a punishment adequate to such a moral transgression in His eyes.

But how is the guilt of the finite fallen creature, man, relatively to God, who is holy and infinite, to be estimated? and in what proportion? As of time to eternity, or of darkness to light? But in neither case could one satisfy the other. The fraction of existence called time, could no more satisfy the demands of eternity without beginning and without end, than darkness could make amends for itself with light. So, also, man, by transgressing God's commandment, as he did in Eden, fell from so great a moral height

to so low a moral depth, that, not only can he no longer retrace his steps, but he cannot even measure the distance at which he finds himself from God. It is even greater than the distance between life and death, for he fell from oneness with God to a complete alienation from Him, and to death, in trespasses and sins.

By sinning against God then, man incurs an amount of moral guilt which is measured, of course, not by man's smallness, but by God's greatness: for the measure of an offence is according to the law and to the person offended; and in this case there is, and can be, no proportion between a finite creature made out of nothing, and an infinite, almighty Creator. There is relation, but no proportion. In this case, then, utter destruction of the creature is the nearest approach to anything like satisfaction for the guilt incurred against Eternal Justice, which can, on no account, be set aside, but must, in all respects, be satisfied to the uttermost.

Therefore was "Thou shalt surely die" the only sentence that could have been uttered against man consistently with the dignity of God's majesty, and with the demands of His unflinching justice. Therefore, also, did God, in this instance say, in answer to Moses, "Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book;" as He again said afterwards, by His prophet, "The soul that sinneth, it shall surely die."[1]

But as in Eden, where a propitiation was provided and an Advocate promised, so also in this case, Mercy rejoiced against Judgment, and Love tempered the

[1] Ezek. xviii. 20.

doom uttered against man, so as to suit the punishment to his weak estate, and yet to satisfy Divine Justice. Moses' intercession so far prevailed with God as that instead of destroying the people as He first declared He would, He said to His servant, "Therefore, now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee"—the Land of Promise.

The people was, on the whole, forgiven, and the guilt should, henceforth, rest on the head of the guilty soul alone. Nay, more—"behold, Mine Angel shall go before thee," said the forgiving God; Mine Angel—the Angel of the Presence, the One in whom "is My Name,"[1] said the Lord God Almighty—the Leader of

[1] Justin Martyr (Dial. c. Tryph. p. 300) quotes this passage to show that, even then, the name JESUS, that was declared neither to Abraham nor to Jacob, belonged to God. *Τίς οὖν εἰς τὴν γῆν εἰσήγαγε τοὺς πατέρας ὑμῶν; ἤδη ποτὲ νοήσατε, ὅτι ὁ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τούτῳ ὀνομασθεὶς Ἰησοῦς, πρότερον Αὐσῆς καλούμενος*; Who, then, brought your fathers into the land of Canaan? See ye not that He it was, who was named JESUS, having before been called Osea or Hosea. If you notice this, ye will also remark that the name of Him who said to Moses, "My name is in Him," was also Jesus."

Eusebius also (Demonstr. Ev. p. 196) applies this passage to Joshua, saying, that angel can be no other than Joshua or Jesus, in whom was the name of the Lord; and as to his being called "an angel," the same was said of John in "Behold, I send Mine angel before thy face that shall prepare the way before thee."

But (1) this depends on the rendering "angel" or "messenger," and (2) the whole context, v. 20–23, cannot apply to Joshua as "the angel" who would keep Moses and the people, to bring him unto the place God had prepared; since Joshua was the servant, and not the leader of Moses,—a beautiful image of Christ making Himself subject to the Law for our sakes, and as S. Ambrose says, "Moyses in nubem intravit, adhærente sibi socio Jesu: quia nemo sine vero Jesu potest incerta sapientiæ et occulta comprehendere. Et ideo in specie Jesu hanc, veri Salvatoris significabatur affutura præsentia, per quem fierent

My hosts, and the Captain of all My archangels; he shall go before thee to fight thine enemies, and to make way for My people. I will do all I can in love, consistently with the Majesty of My Name, and with the claims of My Justice. He, then, shall be thy vanguard, and thy Guide, thy Saviour, the Defender in whom thou mayest put thy trust. "Nevertheless, in the day when I visit, I will visit their sins upon them." No sin can remain unatoned for; it may be forgiven and set aside, but not until satisfaction has been made for it. Therefore is sin always punished in the flesh, even when the moral guilt of it is, on behalf of the sinner, laid on Him "Who bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."[1]

"Depart, then," said God to Moses, "and go up hence unto the land flowing with milk and honey;" and I will send Mine Angel before thee, "for I Myself will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiff-necked people: lest I consume thee by the way"[2]—for I am a jealous God, "and a consuming

omnes docibiles Dei, qui legem aperiret, Evangelium revelaret." (In Psalm. xlvii. enarr.)

Of this there can be no doubt; but it is equally unlikely that the words "Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions," can apply to Joshua. But rather, and bearing in mind what S. Paul tells us, that "Christ went with the people in the wilderness," and that those who tempted Christ "were destroyed of serpents;" and, also, that God said to Moses He would not go with them, but His angel should instead—we may conclude that angel to have been "the Angel of the Presence," Jesus, typified in name and in character by Joshua, the son of Nun. It is the view taken by S. Ephraem (In Ex. vol. i. p. 226), who points to the fact that the angel was to be in the place of God, Who would now no longer go with His people.

[1] Is. liii. 12. [2] Ex. xxxiii. 1.

fire."[1] Thou canst not see Me and live; therefore, shall the Angel of My presence, the Beam from the brightness of My Glory shed on thee light and heat such as thou canst bear; for I love thee. And because I love thee, I will not be extreme to mark what thou doest amiss, and in ignorance of My will or of My nature. But I am also Just. I will, therefore, send with thee Mine Angel, with whom thou mayest converse without fear, and I will hear what He says of thee, and hearken to His pleading on thy behalf. I will hold intercourse with thee through Him; and He will be thy Mediator between the weakness, the frailty, and the shortcomings of thy human nature, and the unapproachable light and glory of My realms.

III.

"And Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the Tabernacle of the Congregation. And it came to pass that every one which sought the Lord, went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation,[2] which was without the camp."

The Lord now no longer abode among His people as a matter of course, but He now must be sought, in order to be found. The idolatry of the people had made separation between the Lord and themselves; and thus, no sooner was the law brought in, because of transgression, than that law became an occasion of sin to a rebellious nature. There could, therefore, now be no more the same intimate unbroken intercourse between God and His people, and He must, by some permanent sign,

[1] Heb. xii. 29.

[2] Or, more correctly, "of the appointment or meeting" between God and the man who sought Him. (Ex. xxxiii. 7.)

testify to their rebellion against Him in choosing other gods; so that albeit He would bring them to the land He had promised their fathers to give them, because of His great name, yet as King He would remove the seat of His kingdom, and the Shrine of His Oracle, away from the people,—far enough not to be among them; and yet near enough to be with them, as regarded other nations around.

Thither had to go those who sought the Lord, and wished to inquire of Him; and thither, also, went Moses, to commune with the Lord as a man with his friend. Then did the cloudy pillar descend and stand at the door of the tabernacle, when the Lord talked with Moses; and every man then worshipped in his tent door at the sight of the pillar of cloud resting on the tabernacle. And when Moses had done communing with the Lord, "he returned again to the camp; but his servant, Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle."

It was on one of these interviews, or rather, intimate communings with God, that Moses, the Mediator of the Old Covenant, asked to be told who He was that was to go up with him, and to bring up the people to the promised land. "Behold," said he, to the Lord, "Thou saidst, Bring up the people, and Thou hast not let me know whom Thou wilt send with me. Now, I pray Thee, if I have found grace in Thy sight, show me now Thy way, that I may know Thee, that I may find grace in Thy sight: and consider that this nation is Thy people. And the Lord said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."

"My presence!"—How, since "no man hath seen

God at any time?" The Only Begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father he hath declared him;"[1] He "the Angel of the Presence," "the image of the invisible God,"[2] "the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person."[3] He, Christ, went with the people of God, even with those with whom "God was not well pleased, since they were overthrown in the wilderness."[4] He was then with "His Church in the wilderness." He is now with His Church in the wilderness of this world, through which He, the Angel of the Presence, brings her up to the good land He has promised, "to the rest that remaineth for the people of God." There God the Father will give her rest, when she is one in Him with Christ, and He is all in all.

Then Moses said to the Lord, "If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." No. What could Israel do wandering in that thirsty land, and threading the narrow valleys of that awful wilderness without guide, without sight or token of the land whither he was tending, and surrounded on all sides by enemies, ready, at any moment, to dispute the right of march through their country?

Unless the Presence went with the people, Moses was wise in not wishing to move. For unless the Lord fought for them, as He had fought against Pharaoh and with Amalek, Israel should never prevail over the Horites and the Moabites east of Jordan, nor overcome the Amorites, the Hittites, and the other inhabitants of Canaan, between that river and the Great Sea. But with Him at the head of their hosts, such enemies would flee before them, and leave

[1] S. John i. 18. [2] Col. i. 15. [3] Heb. i. [4] 1 Cor. x. 5.

them free to conquer the land: Therefore, said Moses, Except Thy presence go with me, better it is for us to abide here in the land where there are no rivers, yet in Thy presence fed by Thee, and under the shadow of Thy mercy-seat, than to venture by ourselves through a wilderness we know not, and in which we should die, were it not for Thy care over us. Here, not only goest Thou before us in a cloud to show us the way by day, and with fire to make our darkness light by night, but Thou givest us, also, Thy bread from heaven, for our daily wants, and Thou cleavest asunder for us the rock of flint for water, "in this land where no water is." With Thee we can want nothing; without Thee we are in want of all things.

Wherein, indeed, "shall it be known here, said Moses, that I, and this people, have found grace in Thy sight? Is it not in that Thou goest with us? So shall we be separated, I, and Thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth."

"And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this thing, also, that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in My sight, and I know thee by name."

Neither the civil rite of circumcision, then, nor yet the holier rite of baptism in the Red Sea, would suffice to separate ostensibly the people of God from other nations; for the one was not understood and mystical, and the other was shared in common even with the Egyptians; but that which distinguished them among others, was that they had found grace with God, and that He, in token of this, did go with them. The real distinction then, that made Israelites, Israelites indeed, was that; for whereas their outward privileges and distinction of being children of Abraham, of hav-

ing being baptized in the cloud and in the sea, and of wearing on them the seal of Abraham's righteousness by faith, availed them so little, in themselves, that, despite these advantages, "they were not all Israel, that were of Israel." "Except the Lord of Sabaoth," says the prophet, "had left us a seed, we had been as Sodom, and had been made like unto Gomorrah."[1]

So, also, with His people, with His Church under the Gospel: "Ye are not in the flesh," wrote S. Paul to all the beloved of God at Rome, called to be saints—"but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."[2] As of old, then, "he was not a Jew which was one outwardly; neither was that circumcision, which was outward in the flesh; but he was a Jew who was one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, and in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God,"[3] so also now "in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."[4]

[1] Rom. ix. [2] Rom. viii. 9, 14. [3] Rom. ii. 28, 29.
[4] Gal. vi. 15, 16.

CHAPTER X.

THE NEW COVENANT.

THE Mediator, even of the old covenant, could not plead in vain, because he pleaded earnestly. He gave himself up for the people: "If Thou wilt not forgive their sin," said he, "blot me, I pray Thee, out of the book which Thou hast written." The suit prevailed, and the people were forgiven.

Nevertheless, that first covenant of the Law was broken. God had promised that He would be the God of His people, if they would hearken to His voice and keep the statutes that He would give them. But no sooner were the statutes given than they were transgressed; the covenant, then, was broken on the people's part, and on God's part the Tables of the Law were destroyed, and His tabernacle was withdrawn from among the people, He declaring that He would no longer go with them. So that, unless He made a new Covenant with the people, the people could not make it with Him, and He and they must continue thus estranged from each other; God being

justly offended at the people so soon choosing for themselves other gods than Him; and the people being at enmity with Him, ashamed of themselves, and yet entirely at His mercy.

But such a state of things could not last. True to the oath made unto Abraham, God was pledged by Himself to bring his children to the land he had promised, so that, under any circumstances, thither Israel must be led. Yet only they who would go thither; for those who thought scorn of that pleasant land should never see it. A new covenant, therefore, must be made between God and His people, that could not be driven, but that must be led, guided, and brought to Canaan, being made to look forward to it, as to the goal of the journey, as to the fulfilment of God's promise, and the enjoyment of the rest He had prepared for them.

He then, He the faithful and merciful high God, Whose love constrained Him towards His people thus helpless in the desert land, towards those sheep of His pasture dependent on His rod and on His staff for food, for drink, and for existence, where everything was dry, and dead—would yet save them. He therefore said unto Moses, "Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest. And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto Mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me in the top of the mount."

And Moses did as the Lord bade him. He hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and rose up early in the morning, and went up unto Mount Sinai as the Lord had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone.

"And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord—the Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, long-suffering and adundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and that will, by no means, clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children unto the fourth generation.

"And Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth and worshipped. And he said, If now I have found grace in Thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray Thee, go among us; for it is a stiff-necked people, and pardon our iniquity and our sin."

"And the Lord said, Behold, I make a covenant: before all thy people I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation; and all the people among which thou art shall see the work of Lord; for it is a terrible thing that I will do with thee."

"Observe thou that which I command thee this day. Behold I drive before thee the Amorite, and the other Canaanites. Take heed unto thyself and make no covenant with the inhabitants of that land, lest it be a snare to thee. But thou shalt destroy their altars and break their images, and cut down their groves; for thou shalt worship no other god; I am a jealous God, lest thou go after the gods of those nations, and make a covenant with them; and thou shalt, therefore, make to thyself no molten gods."

"But thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread in the month of the green ear, at the time that thou camest out of Egypt. Thy first-born, and the first-

lings of thy flock shall be mine; six days shalt thou do thy work, and rest on the seventh; thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the first-fruits of wheat harvest, and of the in-gathering at the year's end; thrice in the year shall all your men-children appear before the Lord God, the God of Israel; thou shalt not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leaven; neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the Passover be left unto the morning; and the first-fruits of the land thou shalt bring unto the house of the Lord thy God."

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words, I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel. And Moses was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread nor drink water. And the Lord wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments."[1]

We cannot help being struck with the difference between this second giving of the Tables of the Law, and the first. In the first instance, and with no further preamble than to warn man and beast from touching the mountain lest they die, did God thunder His law from Sinai until the ground shook under Him and the rocks of Horeb rent asunder at the echoes of His voice speaking to His terrified people. Not a word was then said of a covenant between God and the people, although His dealings with them were in ratification of His covenant with Abraham. But they had been brought out of Egypt, and led from place to place, until they came to Sinai, in passive subjection to the supreme and absolute will of God as their King.

[1] Ex. xxxiv. 1, 28.

And when here, at Sinai, they stood aghast in dismay at the awful display of God's power and majesty, there was, in it all, very little to win over to love and obedience so gross a people, but, on the contrary, there was everything to inspire them with terror, which once over, would leave no motive for obedience to the law given. Thus was the law no sooner given than it was broken, and the first agreement of rewards for blind obedience was thus at an end. The King was estranged from his people, and withdrew Himself from the camp; and, but for a Mediator to plead the cause of the offending people with the offended King, the people must perish. The Mediator of the new covenant steps in, pleads and obtains forgiveness, and the same law is given, but on new tables.

And how? Not amid loud thunders and with an earthquake; but softly does the Lord descend upon the mount in a cloud, there to talk with Moses. And first to proclaim His name, the name of the Lord, "the Lord God merciful"—He had just had pity on His people, and shown mercy to them; "and gracious"—"He alone giveth grace and glory," He had just been gracious in remembering mercy in the hour of wrath; "long-suffering"—He had already suffered long the murmurings of the people ere they left Egypt, and even while the flesh He gave them to eat in the wilderness was in their teeth; "and abundant in goodness and truth"—for there is none good but He, and He is the God of Truth; "keeping mercy for thousands, and forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin"—as he had just done towards His people.

Having thus proclaimed Himself appeased and reconciled, He stated the terms of His covenant with

His people, in certain observances, as well as in the absolute obedience He should then expect from them. He would dispossess their enemies and work wonders for them; but they were to make no covenant with idols and idolatrous nations; they were to keep themselves unto the Lord their God as faithful and liege subjects of Him, their King. This was the frame of the new covenant made by God out of mercy for His people, after the old covenant had by them been broken. It was written down in a book, and God also again wrote on the new tables the words of the covenant, the same Ten Commandments which He had before given. For these could not be abrogated, since they are neither of time nor place; but the spirit of them is eternal and exists everywhere.

This shadow of the law very plainly points to the body thereof, which we find in Christ. For, as Moses, like unto whom "that other Prophet," Christ, was to be raised, became the mediator and the surety of a new and better covenant which he received in detail during forty days' fasting in intercourse with God, so also was JESUS made the Mediator and the Surety of a better covenant which, may be, He also received in full while He abode in the wilderness. For who can tell all that passed between Him pleading for us, and His Father, during those memorable forty days and forty nights he spent fasting for our sakes?

Then came He down to us bearing the new tables of a new covenant with God, as a God forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin in Him and through Him Who made atonement for our sins, and Who is both our Mediator, our Advocate, and our propitiation with God the Father. Softly and humbly did He, the

Mediator, alight here on earth, in a cloud, in a body that veiled the Divine Majesty within, in company with angels that wondered at the sight, and whispered praises of profound adoration around His cradle—around the human form He took in love for us, in order to make it the pledge of our reconciliation and of our acceptance with His Father. For it was while in that form, that He fulfilled the two tables of the testimony which, when given on Sinai, were the writing of our condemnation, but in His hands became for us the bond of a new covenant.

"For we are not come unto the Mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest; and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (for they could not endure that which was commanded, and if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: and so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake.) But we are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

"See, then, that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn

away from Him that speaketh from heaven. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire."[1]

And as a token of how much better was this new covenant than the first, and how much more favourable it was, in mercy to the children of Israel—when Moses came down from the mountain with the two tables of testimony in his hand, his face shone, so that Aaron and the children of Israel were afraid to come nigh him. Literally, "he had sought the Lord, and He heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. He looked unto Him, and was lightened, and his face was not ashamed."[2] But himself wist not that he was radiant of the Light he had beheld. So "he called unto them, and Aaron and the rulers of the congregations returned unto him: and Moses talked with them. And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh: and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him in Mount Sinai. And till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a veil on his face; but when he went in before the Lord to speak with Him, he took the veil off, until he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel that which the Lord commanded; and he put the veil upon his face again, until he went in to speak with Him."[3]

Still, even under that new covenant that was better when compared with the first, the letter of the law did kill; for the spirit alone giveth life. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; and the words which I speak—said 'JESUS, the Surety

[1] Heb. xii. [2] Ps. xxxiv. 4, 5. [3] Ex. xxxiv. 29, 35.

of a better testament,' 'the Mediator of the new covenant,'—they are spirit and they are life."[1] Even so, for there is life in no one else; since in Him was life, and the life was the light of men; and "He hath life in Himself," and "quickeneth whom He will." Nevertheless, shining though the face of Moses was when he came down from the mountain with the glad tidings of a better covenant with Israel, he was but the minister of death compared with the Light the Mediator of the new covenant sheds abroad wherever He comes—He, the Angel of the Presence, beaming with the brightness of His Father's glory, the rays of the Sun of Righteousness, carrying light and life wherever they gleam, and on whatsoever they alight.

"But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance,—which glory was to be done away,—how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by the reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious."

"Seeing we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech; and not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished; but their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the

[1] S. John vi. 63.

Old Testament, which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away."

"Now the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."[1]

[1] 2 Cor. iii. 7, 17.

CHAPTER XI.

THE TABERNACLE, AND THE SERVICE THEREOF UNDER THE NEW COVENANT WITH ISRAEL.

I.

We could not here go into details respecting the Levitical priesthood, all the rites and ceremonies of the service of the tabernacle, and the many laws and ordinances given to the people of Israel, without wandering far from the scope and object of this work, into a maze of more or less fanciful applications of things that are yet uncertain. But we cannot help noticing the broad features of a few shadows in this new period of the stay of Israel in the wilderness.

The first proclamation made by Moses to the people was respecting the Sabbath, which was again enforced as strictly as under the first law. Not only were the children of Israel, as God's liege subjects, bound to keep His day, as a sign between Him and them, a day set apart by Him, and hallowed long before they were in existence; not only were they also, by the rest of the Sabbath day, to be reminded of their own

bondage and servitude in Egypt,—but "the Church in the wilderness" was also to be made to look forward to the rest, not only of Canaan beyond Jordan, but also to that which remaineth for the people of God, in Paradise, beyond the deep flood and dark valleys of the shadow of death.

There will the Church spend an eternal Sabbath in the presence of God, and in company with His angels around His Throne. As I before remarked, the letter of this law of the Sabbath did kill the Sabbath-breaker who disobeyed it, in order to mark the holiness of the day that was God's own; but the spirit of it truly giveth life; and the Lord's day, which is the Sabbath of the Church of Christ in her passage from the shadows of the law to her rest above, is no burden to him who loves the Lord, to Whom the day belongs. The Lord's day is a feast day, no doubt, but a feast unto the Lord; and the promised blessing yet rests on those who make that day of rest unto the Lord, their delight, and keep their foot from polluting it; while those who care neither for the Lord nor for His day, and who do their own pleasure therein, heap up unto themselves, sorrow for their latter days, remorse of conscience, and no blessing in this life.

II.

The law of the Sabbath being first sanctioned, Moses next told the people that the Lord should receive their free-will offerings towards the enlarging and beautifying of the Tabernacle of the Congregation that was outside the camp, together with the furniture and utensils thereof, and the clothing of the priests, whose service should, in some respects, differ from

their former office under the first law. The people now under God's training, responded to His call so readily that they had to be restrained, when their offerings of silver and gold, of fine linen, of wool, of skins, and of precious wood and stones, more than sufficed for the work set by Moses to Bezaleel and to Aholiab to do.

It was, in all its details, according to the pattern God had given him in the mount; a design, we may be sure, wisely ordered in all its parts, and for a definite purpose, and corresponding to some feature "in the true Tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man,"[1] even though we be unable to trace the relative outline in all its details.

Those several parts of the Tabernacle, as well as the Tabernacle itself, and the service thereof, were all, as S. Paul tells us distinctly, "to serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God, when he was about to make the Tabernacle; for, see, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount."[2]

Either we must blot out these words from Holy Writ, or we must receive them. But it would be much more honest, on the part of gainsayers of the truth, to deny the whole thing, than to try, in a lame and crooked way, to find, in the design of the Tabernacle, and in the pattern of the ark, and of other furniture, remnants of Egyptian worship and sanctuaries; as if Moses should have copied them, and not the pattern set him by God. All tents or tabernacles must, indeed, have some points in common, and all

[1] Heb. viii. 2. [2] Heb. viii. 5; Ex. xxv. 9, 40.

square chests, also, some likeness one to another; so that, unquestionably, there were some points of resemblance between the shrine of Ptah or of Chons, and the ark of the covenant, since both were carried in the same way; but so there is a resemblance between those Egyptian shrines and a sedan-chair, and far greater too, I trow, than between them and the mercy-seat. And as regards designs or patterns of embroidery, unless the designs given to Moses were emblematical, as most likely they would be, there can be no reason why the chaste and beautiful designs and patterns of Egyptian workmanship, admirable and harmless in themselves, should not be sanctified by being adopted in the ornaments and in the embroidery for the hangings of the Tabernacle, or for the chasing and engraving of the gold and silver mountings so profusely fitted in every part of the Sacred Tent.

We may presume that the same sun, moon, and stars, shone upon the Israelites as upon the Egyptians; but in either case to a very different purpose; in the one the Sun was worshipped as a God, in the other he shone in the heavens only as an image of Him Who is both a Sun and a Shield for His people. So, also, as regards certain points of contrast or of resemblance between the rites, ceremonies, and sacred utensils of the Mosaic dispensation and the Egyptian worship, it is not philosophical, but positively idle, to look for an intentional introduction of them from a country the Israelites were never again to see, from a people they were commanded to abjure for ever, and from a worship, the name of which even was never to escape the lips of a servant of God.

III.

So, also, as regards the vestments, breast-plate, and other ornaments of the High Priest, and of the other Levites. Because parts of them were to be of fine linen, therefore are we told they were in imitation of Egyptian garments; and that the breast-plate was also no more than an imitation of the gold collar, inlaid with enamel, worn by prophets in Egypt, or of scent-boxes, and other amulets worn by rich men in that country, etc.: but one's pen—at least, mine—refuses to trace any more such comparisons.

I have looked at both the thing itself and the thing compared, and I can find nothing to correspond between the two, for eyes that are neither cross nor dim. No; I prefer, and I verily believe I shall then be nearer the truth, to find some mystical connection between the twelve precious stones of the breast-plate, severally engraved with the name of one tribe of Israel, and the twelve foundations of precious stones of the heavenly Jerusalem, of the Spouse, the Church of Christ, founded on the twelve Apostles of the Lamb, which He, our Immaculate, Eternal High Priest, wore on His breast and on His heart, when making atonement and intercession for her before the mercy-seat on high.[1] "The office of the priest," says S. Seperian of Gabala,[2] "is twofold; it is to offer the people to God, and to bear his iniquity. He that brings an offering, brings it in his bosom; he that

[1] "These four orders of gems," says S. Ephraem, "represent the four orders of the spiritual Israel; and that they were placed upon the breast of the High Priest, signifies that all thoughts of all words are known to Emmanuel's intelligence." (In Exod. p. 231.)

[2] Homil. Armen. p. 102, *seq.*

carries aught, carries it on his shoulders.—When, therefore, the priest went in to make propitiation and the people stood without, sorrowing at being excluded, God afforded him relief through these gems inscribed with the names of the twelve tribes, saying, Thou canst not enter in by thyself, I will bear thee by thy name written on My breast-plate. Then, entering into the Most Holy Place, the high-priest made intercession for the people; for his office is to act as mediator between the people and God."

Albeit then, I will not attempt to thread my way through all the intricacies of such symbolism, any more than I can pretend to say why one name should be engraved on a chrysolite, and another on an amethyst or an emerald, nor yet why every such precious stone in the foundation of the New Jerusalem should be on one side of her and not on another,—I will wait in faith and hope, to understand all this and a great deal more, until I know even as I am known; when He, Who showed Moses "the example and shadow of heavenly things," shows me those same heavenly things, and how well they correspond with the pattern He gave him.

Let us then notice that albeit the whole people of Israel was called "the people of God," "the Church in the wilderness," yet that, as "they were not all Israelites in heart that were of Israel," God had removed His seat in the Tabernacle outside the camp, whither those went who wished to seek Him. So that in "this Church in the wilderness," which consisted of six hundred thousand and more, men, women, and children, besides a mixed multitude, all alike baptized, and all equally set apart from among other

nations, there yet was a small proportion of that assembly that went to seek the Lord, outside the camp, at His dwelling: in other words, there was a sifting in that Church or assembly of the people, of those whose heart was towards the Lord, and of those whose heart was not towards Him; of those, in short, who served Him in earnest, in spirit and in truth, and those who did not.

How small that proportion was, in reality, we shall hereafter see, since only two of that vast multitude did, after all, set foot in the Land of Promise; the whole of the people having murmured against God when on the borders thereof, and "thought scorn of it." Those, then, who sought the Lord, repaired out of the multitude in the camp, to the Tabernacle, where they met God, as it were, by appointment, and at the appointed time; for this is the meaning of the original, which, in the Authorized Version, is rendered, the "Tabernacle of the Congregation." For the leading idea in the original term is not that of a gathering of men congregated together, but that of a definite time, place and motive that brought them together; and this was to seek the Lord at that particular place.

This shadow seems to tell either of "the many called" by baptism into the Church of Christ, which, on earth, is, and must be, a very mixed multitude, and of "the few chosen" ultimately, and when the whole course of life will have given to the one time to "make their calling and their election sure," and to the other time to murmur, and, while on the threshold of heaven, to think scorn of that good land; or it may also point to the comparatively small proportion of

those who will make up the Church in heaven, gathered as she will be out of the Church here in earth. In either case, the holy Apostle must have had in view the greater or less opposition, and even reproach, the earnest worshippers of God in Israel bare from those who were Israelites in the flesh only, when he reminds us that we must suffer persecution from the world, if we wish to be faithful to Christ, but, also, that we are to reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed in us. "Let us go forth, therefore, unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach.[1] For if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." Even so; but "if we deny Him, He will also deny us."[2]

Outside the camp, then, to the Tabernacle, went all those who sought the Lord, not only on the three great festivals, when all the males were bound to appear before the Lord, but at any other time; either pray before the Lord, to attend the morning and evening sacrifices,[3] or to seek relief from a burdened conscience in the offering of a sin or of a trespass offering.

It was in this Tabernacle only, finished and set up on the first day of the first month, the month of the green ear, and thus inaugurating a new order of better things for Israel, who had now to deal with a God forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin,—that the whole array of the rites and ceremonies of the Levitical priesthood was established; and there they were

[1] Heb. xiii. 13. [2] 2 Tim. ii. 12.

[3] "Both lambs," says S. Ephraem, "were a type of our Saviour, Christ, who is the Lamb of God. The morning sacrifice was for the saints, the just, and the innocents, and the evening sacrifice was for the sinners, for all of whom He really died." (In Exod. pp. 230, 233.)

performed with all the form, the pomp, and the splendour ordered by God in His law. To this Tabernacle were Aaron, as High Priest, and his sons anointed and consecrated in the holy garments of their office; and upon this Tabernacle did the Lord descend in a cloud, and on it He abode, in a cloud by day, and in fire by night, thus during the whole of Israel's journeyings in the wilderness. The rising of the cloud from the Tabernacle was, for them, the signal to depart; but as long as it tarried over the Sacred Tent, the people continued encamped where they were.

IV.

But the consecration of Aaron was the first great solemnity for Israel after the Tabernacle was set up. By the command of the Lord, Moses took him and his sons, their garments, the anointing oil, a bullock for the sin offering, and two rams, and a basket of unleavened bread, and gathered all the congregation together at the door of the Tabernacle, and said to them, "This is the thing which the Lord commanded to be done." He then brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water, that is, he baptized them—not only in token of cleansing, but as the first rite of initiation to their holy office. He then put upon Aaron his priestly garments, the ephod with the onyx stones on the shoulders thereof, engraved with the names of the tribes of Israel; he girded him with the girdle, and put upon him the breast-plate of precious stones, and he put in the breast-plate the Urim and the Thummim, the emblems of light, fire, and perfection, and on his head the mitre and the golden crown with HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD engraved on it.

And Moses then took the anointing oil, and anointed the Tabernacle and all that was therein, and sprinkled thereof upon the altar seven times and upon the vessels thereof. And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head, and anointed him to sanctify him. And he brought Aaron's sons and put coats on them and girded them with girdles and put bonnets on them, as the Lord commanded him. Then Moses offered for them the bullock for a sin offering and the ram for an offering of consecration; and he enjoined Aaron to abide with his sons seven days and seven nights in the Tabernacle, after the atonement made for them, during which time lasted their consecration to the priesthood.

Then on the eighth day—the first day of the week, the day on which the priests were to offer sacrifices in the new Temple Ezekiel saw in a vision,[1] and a day especially singled out under the law—did Aaron, now consecrated High Priest, offer with great solemnity a sacrifice for his own sins, and one for the sins of the people, with the burnt offerings and the meat offerings also. And when this was over "Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people, and blessed them, and came down from offering of the sin offering, and the burnt offering, and peace offerings. And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and blessed the people; and the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people. And there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat; which, when the people saw, they shouted and fell on their faces."[2]

Thus ended that first solemn day of the Levitical

[1] Ez. xxiii. 27. [2] Lev. ix. 22, 24.

priesthood. The anointing of the High Priest and of other priests to their office, was approved, their consecration was sanctioned, and the sacrifices they offered for themselves and for the people were accepted, and the sanctity of their office was avowed, when Nadab and Abihu "offered strange fire before the Lord" in their censers, and were at once consumed by fire that went out from the Lord, as a punishment.

What else is that than, as we have already seen, a dim yet clear shadow of Him, the Son, who was consecrated for evermore as our High Priest, with an unchangeable priesthood, to which He was initiated by baptism, Himself of the tribe of Judah, and not a son of Levi, as minister of a new and a better covenant than that of the Law which He came to fulfil, and thus only, to set aside for our sakes? Who put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself; "Who therefore is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such a High Priest became us, Who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high-priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for His own sins, and then for the people's: for this He did once, when He offered up Himself. For the law maketh men high-priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath—'thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek,'—which was since the law, maketh the Son, Who is consecrated for evermore."[1]

And as in Him, "behold, all things are become new," so do the shadows of the law disappear in the

[1] Heb. vii. 22–28.

brightness of His coming, Whose words are spirit and are life, Whose sacrifices are spiritual sacrifices, and Whose worship is a spiritual worship, since no one is His that has not His spirit. As Aaron was a shadow of Him our spiritual High Priest, so also were Aaron's sons, the Levites who ministered at the altar, a figure of the priests who minister at Christ's altar, at "the altar we have, whereof, however, they have no right to eat that serve the Tabernacle"—who would still bring us,—whom "the Son hath made free indeed" —under the bondage of the old and obsolete ordinances of "touch not, taste not, handle not," and of days and new moons. We "children of the light," by comparison with those who lived during the Mosaic twilight, ought to walk as becometh children of the light and of the kingdom, and not of bondage, "after the commandments and doctrines of men;" which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh,"—yet are after all only commandments of men, and nothing more.

Our priesthood, then, is a spiritual priesthood, in fulfilment of the old and in token of our eternal priesthood, which is yet to come—to offer a spiritual sacrifice, in commemoration of "the full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction" once offered for the sins of the whole world by the Lamb without blemish slain for us at the Passover, Whose body we eat and Whose precious blood we drink, not materially, but spiritually, mystically, and mysteriously, whereby we pledge ourselves to Him in sacrament, and He to us. And as this present spiritual sacrifice offered by the spiritual priesthood of a new and better testament

is itself but the shadow of a yet better one to come, that is an heavenly, so also, of the symbolical priestly vestments of the Tabernacle under the law, that were but an example and shadow of better things, the body of which is of Christ, we now have no further need. "Those vestments," says S. Seperian of Gabala,[1] "were appointed because of the grossness of the people, in order that by reason of such outward pomp they might stand in awe of holy things. But the honour of the priest lies not in the vestments he wears, but in righteousness; as David says, 'Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness.' And God wishing to show that such vestments were only outward show, and were not in any way required for the real service of God, Who seeks sincerity of spirit, and Who rejoices in holiness of the heart, in the regal purple and flowers of faith that show forth openly virtues wrought from within,—He commanded Moses that when Aaron went into the Most Holy Place, he should strip himself of his pontifical robes made of fine linen and embroidered with gold, scarlet, purple, and blue, and that he should enter therein clad in his linen tunic alone."

These words from an eminent servant of God in the Church Catholic—though not in that of Rome—should be noticed by certain men at the present day. We, at all events, will do so. Our only vestment, then, shall be the white garment of the righteousness of Him Who is the Lord our Righteousness, and Who made us kings and priests unto God and His Father. And that garment is the white surplice of linen, which is in imitation of the garment of fine linen worn by

[1] Homil. Armen. p. 99.

the High Priest under the law in the Most Holy Place, and symbolical of the righteousness of Him in Whom alone we are both accepted and complete. We want no other attire, and none will we wear. And if others are otherwise minded, and, from mere will-worship and fancy, try to defile our pure and simple worship by their ill-judged and fantastical symbolism of things long ago fulfilled and done away, to the disruption of the body of Christ, on them be the blame, and on their heads rest the guilt of schism in the Church.

V.

It would take us beyond the limits of this Outline to dwell in detail on the several features of the sacrifices appointed, on the sin, trespass, wave and burnt-offerings, and on the ceremonies used in the sundry cleansings of diseases or of other infirmities of the body. We must, however, notice one or two of the most remarkable; and first, the ceremony of the scape-goat on the great Day of the Atonement, on the tenth day of the seventh month.

Then did Aaron take, with other victims, two goats, "upon which he cast lots, one lot for the Lord and the other lot for Azazel, or the scape-goat."[1] The goat upon which the lot fell he offered for a sin-offering; and when reconciliation had been made with the blood thereof[2] he brought the live goat, "and laid both his hands on the head of the goat, and confessed over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and sent him away by the hands of a fit man into the wilderness; and the goat bare all

[1] Lev. xvi. [2] v. 20.

their iniquities upon him unto a land not inhabited," or separated from the rest.[1] "These two goats," says Justin Martyr, "represented the two advents of Christ: the scape-goat signified the laying of the High Priest's hands on Him when sent to death bearing our sins, and the one slain pointed to His second coming when His people shall acknowledge Him as having been slain by them in this same place, Jerusalem."[2] S. Ephraem, however, says that the goat that was slain represented Christ slain for our sakes, and the goat that was sent into the wilderness was also a type of Christ rising from the grave and alive for evermore, Who in Himself bare the sins of many.[3]

But let us tarry awhile by a small company of wretched-looking beings, lying, squatting or crouching outside the gate of the camp, loathsome objects alike shunned by all and shunning everybody, and making, at a distance, signs to the passers-by to throw them food, which they munch or devour if able to do so. Their appearance is hardly human; some have lost their fingers, others their toes and the soles of their feet, others their ears, eyes, or nose and mouth from disease, and the skin of every one is discoloured, covered with running sores or with livid or white blotches—in strange and ghastly contrast to their dark complexion.

They are lepers; sick of a disease that feeds on them till it reaches the seat of life and kills them; and for such a taint there is no remedy among men; no human skill can stay it. There is then no hope from man for these poor creatures; no, none—but

[1] v. 21, 22. [2] Dial. c. Tryph. p. 259.
[3] S. Ephr. Opp. vol. i. p. 245.

one, mercifully provided for them in the touch and intercession of the High Priest, who, with the power of healing he had received from God by virtue of his office, performed certain prescribed ceremonies, and healed the leper. He took two sparrows[1] alive and clean, and cedar wood, and scarlet and hyssop; he then slew one of the birds in an earthen vessel over running water, and sprinkled the living bird, the wood and the scarlet and the hyssop, as well as the leper to be cleansed, with the blood of the bird that was slain; after which he let the living bird loose into the open field. Then on the eighth day he offered a lamb without spot or blemish for the leper, who, when once cleansed, offered in thanksgivings the humblest of all sacrifices, a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.[2]

Why then should the High Priest have received power over this "incurable disease," and not over lighter infirmities, such as blindness, lameness, or deformity, so that he could not cure even sons of Levi of any these, but had to shut them out from their

[1] Or "birds." "These," says Jacob of Serug, in a hymn on the subject, "show the death of our Lord and His crucifixion, for He was made a victim both mortal and immortal; in one, offering both death and life for the remission of our sins. So also was our Lord both dead and living in His crucifixion; Himself was a victim both dead and living in one; slain over the water, and flying upwards to His Father's side.

Of all the mysteries Moses put before us in symbols, none so plainly shows the death of Christ, a sacrifice in which the blood was shed mystically, one bird living as type of the great sacrifice. Thus also did our Lord die in the body, yet lived with His Father: living of His own life, and sitting on high with Him that begat Him. By the blood thus poured over the water was baptism represented; it was, as it were, portrayed by the water over which the blood of the bird was shed." (Jacob of Serug in S. Ephr. Opp. vol. i. p. 243.)

[2] Lev. xiv.

sacred office if they were at all so afflicted ?[1] Here is the answer:—

"When JESUS was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him.

"And behold, there came a leper and worshipped Him, saying, Lord, if Thou wilt Thou canst make me clean.

"And JESUS put forth His hand and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy was cleansed. And JESUS saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them."[2]

The leprosy was, from its incurable and hereditary character, and from its fatal effect on the body of man, an emblem of sin on his soul—also hereditary, deadly, and loathsome in God's eyes. And for this moral taint and incurable disease of the soul there is no remedy but one, the touch and the intercession of Him Who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and Who alone heals us of the plague of sin. He stays it from becoming deadly in those who come to Him by faith in His atonement for sin; as He stayed it from being the death of the leper who came to Him believing that He could and would cure him. Our tender and compassionate High Priest, Whom no taint could defile, held out His healing hand at once, and, without chiding the poor leper for his leprosy, said, "I will; be thou clean." Uncleanness, disease, and death fled at once at His will, and he was made clean. But the offering prescribed by the law must be brought to the priest; so JESUS told the leper to go and offer the

[1] Lev. xxi. 16. [2] S. Matt. viii. 1, 4.

gift that Moses commanded as a testimony to them, first—that He was the true High Priest Whose touch did heal leprosy and sin, of Whom the High Priest in the temple was but a figure; and, secondly—that He was come not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it.

By such examples and shadows did the Angel of the Presence, Christ, Who went about with the people in the wilderness, teach them things belonging unto Himself. No wonder if the shadows were so clear when the Sun was so near at hand. And yet, how many understood them? How many besides Moses and Joshua, perhaps, saw in those shadows the object they reflected? No, not even while He, Who is consecrated for evermore, assisted Himself at the service of the Tabernacle in making such a service acceptable unto His Father, as a pledge of the sacrifice He would one day offer unto Him,—a sacrifice in all respects perfect, holy, sufficient, and therefore acceptable and accepted. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."[1]

VI.

Yet must we bear in mind that although these types, shadows, or emblems had their fulfilment in Christ, and centred on Him, some of them pointed beyond His first advent, to the perfected state of His Church in heaven, and were thus to be, in a measure, continued in His Church on earth, between His first and His second coming; commemorative of the former and, in a degree, preparatory for the latter.

Such was, for instance, the threefold ministry of High Priest, Priests, and Levites, partly continued in

[1] Rom. x. 4.

that of bishops, priests, and deacons; which again points to the time when the Church shall be one royal priesthood, with one eternal High Priest. Such also were the feasts of the Lord; not only the Sabbath, but the Passover, or the feast of unleavened bread, in the first month, the month of the green ear, or of spring; the waving of the sheaf of the first-fruits on the eighth day, the day after the Sabbath, the first day of the week—when a lamb without blemish of the first year was offered in burnt-sacrifice unto the Lord; likewise the feast of Pentecost or of fifty days, reckoned from the morrow after the Sabbath, that is, from the day of the sheaf of the wave-offering, on which day special sacrifices for sin and all peace-offerings were offered. Such was the feast of harvest, when the gleanings were ordered to be left for the poor; also the feast of trumpets on the first day of the seventh month, and on the tenth day of that month the great day of the atonement; and on the fifteenth of it the feast of tabernacles, in remembrance of the dwellings of Israel in the wilderness. Two of these feasts, the Passover and Pentecost, are yet observed by the Church, and it would be well if a solemn day were set apart throughout the land as a day of thanksgivings for harvest.

So, also, the marriage of priests under the law; their having no inheritance among their brethren, because the Lord and His service was their inheritance; their partaking of the altar at which they ministered, that was to be "their food;"[1] likewise the tenth part of of all income and produce being the Lord's, and given to Him, and other like institutions have a right in

[1] Lev. xxii. 7.

themselves, and rest on a principle, which the impiety or short-sightedness of man cannot attempt to touch without incurring the displeasure, if not the curse, of Him who gave these ordinances, not only as a shadow of spiritual things to be fulfilled in heaven, but as expressions of His will, to hold good, also, for all time on earth, and to remind us of what is to follow hereafter.

In many such ordinances, the symbolical and the temporal details referring to God and to Him as King of Israel, were, of necessity, so interwoven—as they must have been, since He was both Eternal God, Saviour, Deliverer, Redeemer, and temporal King of His people—that we cannot sever the one from the other. Thus, as regards the institution of the Pentecost of years, called the Jubilee, it was entirely with reference to the occupation of Canaan by the children of Israel; therefore, wholly prospective when instituted in the wilderness, where it could not take effect. The object of this Sabbath of years was to remind the children of Israel, from time to time, that their only "safety in that land was by keeping God's statutes,"[1] for that they were His servants, strangers and sojourners with Him in the land that was His, and which He, therefore, gave them to hold on a fifty years' lease, to be renewed every fifty years at the Jubilee, when every man was expected to return to his inheritance, and to take possession of the land that he could not sell for more than fifty years. "The land," said God, "shall not be sold for ever, for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with Me. And in all the land of your possession, ye shall grant a re-

[1] Lev. xxv. 18, 19.

demption for the land." So binding was this contract on God's part, and so solemn was the year of the Jubilee, wherein the children of Israel were forcibly reminded of their bondage to God—"they are My servants,"[1] said He of them—that the last year but one before that of the Jubilee, God commanded His blessing on the land that it should bring forth fruit for three years, so as to follow the seventh, and on the eighth year, that of the Jubilee, they should eat of of the old store[2] until the new fruits of that year came in.

It is, of course, evident that, while the broad outline of Canaan, as the Land of Promise for Israel in the wilderness, points to Heaven, yet that all these political details of the shadow are not applicable to the reality. And so with very many other laws and ordinances given by God to His people, in which His attributes as God were so blended with His authority and rule as temporal King, as to be inseparable. As, for instance, in the case of blasphemy, that was punished with death, like Sabbath breaking; the offence was twofold, against God and against the King; proved as this is by the oath, "the Lord liveth," the formula of which, in the original, differs in term and construction from the like expression when said of men.

Everything was now ready, the Tabernacle was set up and consecrated; the High Priest anointed, and the Levites sanctified; and God spake to Moses from His oracle—the Mercy-seat, wherein were the Tables of the Law, overshadowed by the Cherubim. There did God set up His throne in Israel; and thence did He

[1] Lev. xxv. 42. [2] V. 20, 22.

make His will known, not only to Moses, with whom He communed thence, but more or less with His people, Israel.

On the day that the Tabernacle was reared up, the cloud covered the Tabernacle, namely the Tent of the Testimony: and at even there was upon the Tabernacle, as it were, the appearance of fire until the morning. So it was always: the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night. "And when the cloud was taken up from the sanctuary, then, after that the children of Israel journeyed; and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents. Whether it were two days, or a month, or a year, that the cloud tarried upon the Tabernacle, remaining thereon, the children of Israel abode in their tents, and journeyed not: but when it was taken up they journeyed. At the commandment of the Lord they rested in their tents, and at the commandment of the Lord they journeyed: they kept the charge of the Lord, at the commandment of the Lord by the hand of Moses."[1]

[1] Numb. ix.

CHAPTER XII.

DEPARTURE FROM SINAI, INTO THE WILDERNESS OF PARAN.

I.

"And it came to pass, on the twentieth day of the second month in the second year, that the cloud was taken from off the Tabernacle of the Testimony. And the children of Israel took their journeys out of the wilderness of Sinai; and the cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran."[1] And they took their first journey according to the commandment of the Lord, by the hand of Moses, in the following order of march: the tribe of Judah, of Issachar, of Zebulun, and then the Tabernacle, carried by the sons of Gershon and of Merari. Then followed Reuben, Simeon, and Gad, and after them came the Kohathites carrying the Sanctuary, for which they always found the Tabernacle already set up when they came up to it. And, as rereward of the Sanctuary, followed the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin, Dan, Asher, and Naphtali.

Eleven months had Israel continued under the frowning brow of Sinai, fed from heaven every morn-

[1] Numb. x. 11, 12.

ing, and watered from the rock, in order to learn his first lesson, that the Lord is King, and that He was to be obeyed, under pain of death or of sudden destruction—the one inevitable doom of every offender against the Divine Majesty. Israel had not so soon forgotten the plague that followed their worship of the molten calf, as the law given before it. Suffering and affliction had made a more lasting impression upon the people than God's law, even when thundered from the mount; and the people was now under training.

This halt at Sinai, there, around, as it were, the throne of God, gave Israel time to receive a code of laws, intended partly for immediate use, and partly for the country to which God was leading him; laws temporal and laws spiritual, with a form of worship also temporal, adapted to the present need of the nation, once to be done away, and to make room for a spiritual worship, of which the visible rites and ceremonies were but a faint shadow. Israel was now fairly constituted God's people under His rule and government, with laws given by Him, and to which attached either the richest blessings or the most awful curses.

The laws were given, the Tabernacle was finished; the service of it was established in all its details, and there was a lull of incidents in the daily routine of the camp. The manna was now no new thing, the water from the rock had become a matter of course, for thither they went at even, to draw water for their wants, and there, in the heat of day, they might slake their thirst with a quickening draught of that living stream. The people had got used to see the cloud by day brooding over the Tabernacle, and had ceased to wonder at the light it shed at night,

turning it into day, and vying with the bright silver gleam of the desert moon, that shines as no moon shines any where else.

Every man's tent had already become his house. The few utensils he owned had got every one its place; his wife and children the corner allotted them; the features of the desert hills, and the outline of the camp, had all become familiar,—the rays of morn and the glow of even on the rocks of Horeb, the cry of the ravens, and the flight of the black and white vultures, grown tame with the food given them; and neighbours of tents adjoining were wont to meet at even, and chat over all they had seen and gone through, wondering at what yet awaited them—when the cloud was seen to rise above the tabernacle. In a moment all was astir; the tent was soon struck and as soon packed, the trough tied on the bundle; the ass laden with it; or it was carried on man's back; and the order of march was given. They waited for the dawn; and when it began to glimmer behind the mountains, the signal was given, and the cloud went before them to show them the way they should go.

"And they departed from the mount of the Lord three days' journey: and the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them in the three days' journey, to search out a resting-place for them. And the cloud of the Lord was upon them by day when they went out of the camp. And, when the ark set forward, Moses said, Rise up, Lord, and let Thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate Thee flee before Thee. And when it rested, he said, Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel."[1]

[1] Num. x. 33–36.

Who is there among us that does not long to have then been of Israel? to be thus fed from heaven, watered from the rock, led, day by day, and step by step, in the way he should go, beholding the glory of the Lord, and the wonders He wrought in behalf of His people—thus guided, protected, delivered, rescued, saved, and at last brought to rest in that good land flowing with milk and honey yonder, beyond the desert hills of the wilderness? Who?

Do we not think and say that, under such an escort and on such a journey, with such a prospect in view, we should have feared nothing, dreaded nothing; that we should have gone on our way rejoicing, the way, too, in which He led us, where we should have bread in abundance to eat, and water for our thirst in the heat; wherein the rugged stones and the burning sand on our path should neither wear nor blister the sole of our feet; wherein, during the heat of day, He would be to us like the shadow of a great rock; and as to murmuring!—how could we, with His presence going with us to prepare a place for us on the journey, to provide for us there, to scatter our enemies before us, and then to give us rest? Murmuring, longing for the flesh-pots of Egypt while being fed with bread from heaven, or for the water of the Nile while drinking of the clear mountain stream that flowed at His bid, in a dry and thirsty land! No, the desert, we say, would have blossomed for us as the rose; the stones on our path would have made us careful in the way lest we should stumble, but would never have hindered us in following the lead of the cloud, away from the barren rocks of the desert, to the smiling meadows of the Promised Land.

Why, then, since those things happened to them for ensamples, and are written for our admonition, do we yet the same and even worse than the children of Israel did in the desert of Paran? We are journeying in the wilderness towards a better land, "even an heavenly;" we have, at all times, every one of us for himself, "boldness of access unto the throne of grace;" which is indeed for us a mercy-seat, made such by Him Who is our High Priest, touched with the feelings of our infirmities, the end for us of that law that was overshadowed by the cherubim. For He there stands making intercession for us, and offering up our prayers unto the Father with Whom He made reconciliation for us through the blood of His cross.

And if only we will not follow our own way, but allow ourselves to be guided through the dark valleys, the narrow mountain passes, and the hot sandy plains of the wilderness through which we must make our way to the land of Canaan, we have only to look and see; there is the cloud of providential dealings, of warnings, of mercies, of deliverances, showing us the way by day, and giving us light unto our path at night,—smoothing difficulties, making crooked ways straight, and rough places plain in the desert. Ever and anon, when wearied of the way, foot-sore, toiling, and heavy-laden—the lot of a stranger and pilgrim ever on the march, and resting nowhere until he rest at home — His presence with us will glint on our path like a ray of light from the darkest cloud, just to show us the way, to tell us He is near and watching over us, and to bid us walk by faith in His promises, trusting Him with all our heart for what is to come.

And in order to give us strength for our journey,

He gives us provision by the way; He feeds us with the true bread from heaven, that "which is meat indeed, and that which is drink indeed," wherein He is present with us, not in a coarse material form,—we worship no god under even the semblance of a calf,—but by His Spirit, spiritually and really does He make us "members incorporate of Himself;" He bears us as on eagles' wings over the rough places of the earth; He sends His angels to keep us from harm by the way; He refreshes us in drought, and shelters us from the storm; He cares for us, watches over us, leads, guides and delivers us, pledged as He is by His great name to bring us safe into Canaan above,—and yet, with all this, while the flesh of His mercies and the bread of His gifts are yet in our mouth, we murmur, we cast wistful glances, nay, longing looks, towards Egypt; we count His presence as nothing, and think scorn of His good land, if only we might sport ourselves on the plains of Moph, and eat our fill of the cakes offered at the shrine of Apis.

Therefore does it often happen to us as it happened to the people of Israel. "They complained and it displeased the Lord; and the Lord heard it, and His anger was kindled, and the fire of the Lord burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp. And the people cried unto Moses, and when Moses prayed unto the Lord, the fire was quenched."[1]

Even His mercy—the mercy that rejoiceth against judgment—could not be long-suffering in this case. What had the people to complain of? Led astray by the evil example of the mixed multitude that went

[1] Num. xi. 1, 2.

with them but had no share in the covenant, the Israelites even wept and said, "Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers and the melons, and the leeks and the onions, and the garlic; but now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all beside this manna before our eyes."[1]

Even the garlic of Egypt was thought preferable to the bread of heaven! So thought the children of Israel, under the evil influence of the mixed multitude of Egyptians, of Hittites, may be, or of the Amalekite Sasus, who, hated in Egypt, had joined their lot to that of Israel and shared in his fortunes. Fed were they, led and protected; the morning dew of manna did not stop short of the tents of these retainers on Israel's host; but for the sake of Israel, and while journeying with him, did He Who "causeth His rain to fall on the just and on the unjust," shower His food on them also, and with Israel also they drank of the same brook.

But these gifts were not in covenant with that mixed multitude which was thus kept alive in the wilderness by means of Israel and on Israel's account. A remarkable "ensample" of the Church outsiders; of those who put in their lot with her for the sake of the loaves and fishes, and of what they can get; who think that "gain is godliness," who look upon the Church as a mere secular institution, and follow her as such; utter strangers as they are to the spiritual life, and to her covenant with God. Those outsiders were not formally excluded; they were Egyptians or Ishmaelites of Amalek, or of Amalekite kindred; but they

[1] Ver. 4, 6.

cast in their lot with Israel as a venture, no worse, and possibly better, than their life in Egypt. They were blind to God's dealings with His people, except so far as they afforded them the means of subsistence, and helped them to eke out their living; but their sympathies were rather with the descendants of Ham, or with jealous children of Ishmael; and with them they mingled apart from the people of God, and joined the Canaanites as soon as they were sure of support among them. If some kindred feud hindered them from siding with Amalek in Rephidim, they continued with Israel, as thorns in their eyes and snares in their way, but only till they found a better opportunity of settling by themselves.

II.

This mixed multitude then "fell a-lusting," and induced Israel to do the same. They loathed that light bread "that came down from heaven every day —albeit, it was angels' food—and they cried unto Moses and unto God for flesh to eat. And the Lord heard them. Flesh they would have, and flesh they should have to eat, not for one day, not for two days, nor five days, neither ten days nor twenty days, but even a whole month, until it came out of their nostrils and be loathsome unto them; because, said the Lord to them, ye have despised the Lord which is among you, and have wept before Him, saying, Why came we forth out of Egypt?"

And Moses said, "The people are six hundred thousand foot-men; shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them? or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them to suffice them?" How much like

"two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little!" "And the Lord said unto Moses, Is the Lord's hand waxed short? Thou shalt see now whether My word shall come to pass unto thee or not."[1]—"And Jesus said, Make the men sit down."

It is impossible not to bring together these two miracles, in some respects alike, though widely different in their bearing. The one was a miracle of mercy, the other was, as we shall see, one of judgment.

Meanwhile Moses gathered together the seventy elders of Israel appointed by God, and told them the words of the Lord. They met him at the Tabernacle of the congregation, where the Lord came down in a cloud, and where He met Moses, and took some of the spirit that was on him and put it upon the seventy elders,[2] who, when the spirit rested on them, began to prophesy.

Two of them, however, Eldad and Medad, came not to the Tabernacle with the rest, but stayed in the camp; and the spirit came also upon them, and they, too, prophesied in the camp. And there came a young man to tell Moses that Eldad and Medad were prophesying. Then Joshua, the son of Nun, jealous for his master, said, My lord Moses, forbid them. But Moses answered, almost in the words of "the Prophet like unto him," when He said to John, who came telling Him of one who was casting out devils, and whom he had forbidden because he followed not with them, "Forbid him not; for he that is not against us is on our part;"[3] so also Moses said to Joshua, "Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the

[1] Num. xi. 19, 23. [2] V. 25. [3] S. Mark ix. 38; S. Luke ix. 49.

Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them!"[1] And in the same spirit did the holy Apostle say long after, yet, still in the Church, "some indeed preach Christ of envy and strife, and some also of goodwill; the one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, but the other of love. What then? Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."[2]

For such is the real spirit of the Church of Christ, of Him Who is not extreme to mark what is done amiss, in compassion for our infirmities, and Who does not, therefore, limit His grace to the bounds set to it by man, but Who has mercy on whom He will have mercy—within the boundaries Himself has set, those of His Truth. He who had just given such stringent laws to His people, and such exact and solemn form of worship and of service to His priests, was more generous than even the righteous Joshua, who was justly jealous for his lord Moses; and Eldad and Medad, though neither found among the seventy, nor around the Tabernacle, were yet suffered to prophesy in the camp—but why? "because the spirit rested upon them." Wherein we notice, of course, two things; first, that among the people of God there was a, so to speak, National Church, with a very definite outline that made part and parcel of the Commonwealth of Israel, and without which Israel could never have been a nation; and, secondly, that the Spirit of God also rested on some who did not in all respects conform to the rules of that National Church nor to the authority thereof.

[1] Num. xi. 29. [2] Phil. i. 15–18.

III.

And this is precisely the temper of the Church of Christ, and in it of the Church of this country. Strong in her own strength, or rather in her consciousness that she holds the Truth as it is contained in the Word of God, which is her Rule of Faith, and striving after nothing but to keep undefiled the "faith once delivered to the saints,"—the Church of England, not as she is misrepresented by some of her members, but as she is in her spirit and formularies, has no other object than to be found faithful in her spiritual stewardship; she has no personal interests apart from those of her Head, Christ, and therefore she, like Him, embraces many in her bosom which other churches would thrust out from them. She does not persecute with arrogance like that of Rome, and her hands are clean of the blood of saints. She is not straitened within the narrow fences of Calvin's brotherhood, or of other men's systems; but she can afford and she loves to show kindness and to suffer with goodwill the Eldads and the Medads, on whom the Spirit rests, and who prefer to abide in the camp rather than be with the rest around the Tabernacle, and she says, Would God all the Lord's people were prophets! in spite of the many Joshuas who cry, My lord Moses, forbid them! For albeit there is only one Church, and in it, only one form better than all others, yet is not the grace of God restricted to the limits set to it by man.

IV.

Then Moses and the elders of Israel returned to the camp. "And there went forth a wind from the

Lord, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall round about the camp—as it were two cubits high upon the face of the earth. And the people stood up all that day and all that night, and all the next day, and gathered the quails; and while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague. And he called that place Kibroth-hattaavah, or 'the graves of lust,' because there they buried the people that lusted.'"

"So they did eat and were well filled, for He gave them their own desire; but He sent leanness withal into their soul."[1] He did for them what they wished, and by so doing showed them how little they knew what to wish for. They murmured at God's dealings with them, in other words, they were thankless for His mercies to them and for the lot He assigned them, and cried for something else they should like better,—and thus, in fact, mistrusted Him and in their hearts rebelled against Him. He therefore gave them their desire, but sent also leanness into their soul. Their lust turned to their own decay, and plague came upon them ere they had eaten the meat for which they had lusted.

These things happened unto them for examples, and seeing they were also written for our admonition, it is a wonder we do not profit more than we do by them. For God's dealings are the same with His children now as then. Not one of them feels thankless for His mercies, for the lot which He in His wisdom has assigned him in life, and not one murmurs against Him,

[1] Ps. lxxviii. cvi.

by desiring aught He does not see fit to give,—for to desire what He does not give is to murmur against His wisdom and care,—without rueing for it soon or later.

If in pity and wisdom He still continues to withhold the thing we crave for, our thanklessness and fretting are in themselves a sufficient hindrance to our peace of mind; but if we continue to long for the thing denied, He then may, and often does, grant it; but with it also the feeling that, as we insist on taking the management and guidance of our own life out of His hands into our own, we must also with it take the consequences thereof;—remorse at having doubted His love and care, shame at our own selves, and inevitable disappointment in the object itself for which we longed so much, and which we can enjoy neither with peace of mind nor with a good heart. Until, perhaps, this awful sentence rings in our ears, "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone."

From Kibroth-hattaavah the children of Israel removed to Hazeroth. Here Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses, because of the Ethiopian woman he had taken. We can say nothing of circumstances respecting which we know absolutely nothing, if by this Ethiopian woman we are to understand another wife than Zipporah, Hobab's sister, the daughter of Raguel, Reuel, or Jethro, priest of Midian. The original term "Cushite," however, is of such wide import, that until we have ascertained that Jethro, though living in Midian, was not of Cushite race, this Ethiopian woman may have been Zipporah herself. Moses' union with her had, of course, long been sanctioned, and the circumstances here recorded may have been

a private family quarrel; an occurrence from which Moses' character would not exempt him from his brother the high-priest and his sister the prophetess.

We may, however, safely conclude that Miriam and Aaron were in the wrong, from the manner in which the Lord avenged Moses and visited Miriam. When the cloud in which the Lord had spoken departed from the Tabernacle, behold, Miriam was leprous. Then Aaron besought Moses for her, and Moses prayed unto the Lord, Who commanded she should be shut out of the camp for seven days, until she was healed.

"The children of Israel then departed from Hazeroth, and pitched in the wilderness of Paran."

CHAPTER XIII.

TWELVE MEN ARE SENT TO SPY THE LAND; MURMURINGS OF THE PEOPLE.

I.

ONWARDS to Canaan. These glad tidings soon spread through the camp when the cloud rose from above the Tabernacle, and the people left Hazeroth; and then through Rithmah, Laban, and other stations in the wilderness of Paran, they came within fifteen months of their leaving Egypt to Kadesh-barnea, on the threshold of the Promised Land. The desert was now behind them, and before them rose the green hills and the swelling downs of the land flowing with milk and honey, which God had promised their fathers to give them.

Then the elders of the people came to Moses and prayed that he would send men to spy the land, of what sort it was, and whereat the people should come up. The thing pleased him well, and he chose one man from every tribe. Among them were Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, of the tribe of Judah, and Oshea,

the son of Nun, whom Moses called Jehoshuah,[1] of the tribe of Ephraim; and he sent them up from Kadesh, saying, "Go up this way, southward into the mountain, and see the land, what it is, and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many;—and what the land is, whether it be fat or lean; and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in tents or in strongholds. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land."

"So they went up, and searched the land from the wilderness of Zin unto Rehob, as men come to Hamath. And they ascended by the south, and came to Hebron, where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the children of Anak, were. And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff, and they brought of the pomegranates and of the figs. And they returned from searching of the land after forty days."[2]

And they came back to the people of Israel at Kadesh, and to Moses, and told him, saying, "We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. Nevertheless, the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled and very great; and moreover we saw the children of Anak there; the Amalekites, the Hittites, Jebusites, and Amorites also,

[1] Ἰησοῦς δὲ Χριστὸς καλεῖται διωνύμως, "but Jesus Christ," says S. Cyril (Catech. x.), "has a twofold name—Jesus as Saviour, and Christ as High Priest. And Moses, the most divine of prophets, knowing this, gave these two names to the two best men. He called his successor Joshua or Jesus, and his brother Aaron, anointed, or Christ."

[2] Num. xiii.

dwell in the mountains, and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and by the coast of Jordan."

At the sight of the luscious fruits of that good land, laid at the feet of Moses, on the dry, parched soil of Kadesh, in a hot summer month, too, the eyes of the people glistened and their mouth watered. Such grapes, such figs and pomegranates, from a land flowing with milk and honey! What a contrast to their present condition, toiling from day to day among the hot sandy valleys and plains of the desert, that were forsaken in those hot months even by the birds of the air and by the beasts of the field; and, like the region of death, without a tree to gladden the eye, or a rill of water to quench a burning thirst.

"Only a few days' march, over these hills," said Caleb, "and your eyes will feast over the wooded glens of Hebron; your flocks and herds will feed at leisure by the brooks that run from the hills amid the rich pastures of the land the Lord careth for; while ye shall sit every man under his fig-tree and by his vineyard, and there rest from your toils, and bless the Lord for bringing you thither. There are strong men there, children of Anak, men of valour, and giants; but fear them not; the Lord Who defeated Amalek in Rephidim will fight for us against the Anakim, and with His help we shall overcome them and take their land in possession; for it is the Lord's, and He will give it us."

So spake Caleb, whose heart was to the Lord, and who believed His promise; and thus did he try to still the people, and bid them be of good courage, and go up at once; "for," said he, "we are well able to overcome it." But the other men that went up with

him, whose heart was not upright, and who did not trust in the Lord's promise, said to the people, "Nay, we be not able to go against the people: for they are stronger than we." They brought an evil account of the land to the people, telling them that "it eateth up the inhabitants thereof," and that when they saw the children of Anak, "we," said they, "were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so were we in their sight."

At these words the congregation of Israel forgot all that the Lord had hitherto done for them; the high hand and the stretched-out arm with which He had brought them out of Egypt, all His wonderful interpositions in their behalf that marked the eventful year just closed of their march through the wilderness. They turned their eyes from the fruits of Canaan which erst they longed to taste, and only thought of the enemies they should have to encounter; and, forgetting the Lord Who had led and fed them thus far, and looking only to themselves, they turned away from the hills of Canaan, and looking at the wilderness that spread before them, they lifted up their voice and murmured saying, "Would God we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! And wherefore hath the Lord brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? Were it not better for us to return to Egypt? And they said to one another, Let us make a captain, and let us return to Egypt."[1]

Thus did they "despise the pleasant land and believed not the word of the Lord; but murmured in

[1] Num. xiv.

their tents, and hearkened not unto His voice. And therefore He lifted up His hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness."[1]

In vain did the true and loyal men, Caleb and Joshua, come again to the people, to try and persuade them to go up, saying, "The land through which we passed is an exceeding good land"—the best of all lands, "the land the Lord careth for." "If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey." There was no question about the land, it was there; nor about the produce thereof, it lay before them; and as to the warlike inhabitants thereof, at the waving of Moses' rod the sea had covered the host and chariots of Pharaoh, and Amalek was defeated in Rephidim. But the question was, "If the Lord delight in us." And why should there be any doubt about it, seeing that "such as are upright in their way" and "they that deal truly are the Lord's delight;" nay, more—"seeing the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, Who delighteth in his way?"[2]

Joshua, who was upright, and who dealt truly, who was a good man, and whose steps from Kadesh to the cities of Anak and back had been ordered of the Lord, doubted, and might well doubt if, after the manifold murmurings and other provocations of the children of Israel, the Lord would so delight in them as to bring them up at once into that good land, fight their battles there, and give them the rest they so little deserved. Therefore did he say, "If the Lord delight in us;" there is no other doubt, and that there

[1] Ps. cvi. 25. [2] Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24.

should be that doubt is your own fault. Wait and see what the will of the Lord is concerning you now; "Only rebel not against the Lord; neither fear ye the people of the land, for they are bread for us"—the sword of the Lord will consume them—"their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us; fear them not."

So spake the faithful, honest, true servants of the Lord, Caleb and Joshua. "But all the congregation bade them stone them with stones"—as the children of that people also did to Joshua's antitype, his own Lord, JESUS;[1] as they did to God's prophet Zachariah, as they did to His first martyr, S. Stephen, and to His faithful Apostle and servant, S. Paul, and as the world still does, if not in deed, at least in word, to the Lord's servants who will be faithful to Him, "and not seek to please men." It was true in the wilderness, it was true in the temple, outside the gate of the city, at Lystra, and it is yet everywhere true that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution;" and "that evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived."[2] It was so then: "for the men who made all the congregation to murmur against Moses, by bringing up a slander upon the land, died by the plague before the Lord. But Joshua, the son of Nun, and Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, lived still"[3]—Joshua to bring the people into that good land, and Caleb to inherit it.

"Then the Lord said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke Me? and how long will it be ere they believe Me for all the signs which I have

[1] S. John x. 31. [2] 2 Tim. iii. 12. [3] Num. xiv. 36.

showed among them? I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them."

But Moses pleaded and said, "I beseech Thee let the power of my Lord be great, according as Thou hast spoken, saying, The Lord is long-suffering and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty.—Pardon, I beseech Thee, the iniquity of this people, according unto the greatness of Thy mercy, and as Thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now."[1]

"And the Lord said, I have pardoned according to thy word: But, as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord. Because all these men which have seen My glory, and My miracles which I did in Egypt, and in the wilderness, and have tempted Me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to My voice; surely they shall not see the land which I sware unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked Me see it: but My servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed Me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went: and his seed shall possess it.

"How long shall I bear with this evil generation? said the Lord. I have heard their murmurings which they murmur against Me; say then, unto them, As I live, saith the Lord, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you: your carcases shall fall in this wilderness. Doubtless ye shall not come into that good land; but your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised. But they shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your

[1] V. 13, *seq.*

frowardness until your carcases be wasted in the wilderness; after the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, and ye shall know the altering of My purpose. In this wilderness ye shall be consumed, and there ye shall die. To-morrow turn you and get you into the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea."[1]

Ten times had He borne with them, with their murmurings and their waywardness, and time after time He had forgiven them, and had wrought fresh wonders in their behalf; but now the day of His long-suffering was ended, and His Justice asserted her claims. The sentence had gone forth from which there could be no appeal. No pleading would now avail for so sinful and stiff-necked a people; they had thought scorn of that pleasant land, and despised the Lord's promise, therefore should they not see it, but the promise should be ratified to their children, who would go in and possess it. The people mourned greatly, as well they might, when Moses told them what the result of their murmurings would be; and by way of showing their regret "they rose up early in the morning and gat them up into the top of the mountain, saying, Lo, we be here, and will go up into the place which the Lord hath promised: for we have sinned."

II.

But it was now too late. No doubt they would go up when they heard they should not; yet, as they would not hearken but murmured, and thought light

[1] Num. xiv. 35, *seq.*

of the land when it was offered them and they were told to go up and possess it, the Lord would not now be with them if they ventured in the direction opposite to that in which He commanded them to go. And Moses warned them of it. "Wherefore," said he, "do ye now transgress the commandment of the Lord? But it shall not prosper. Go not up, for the Lord is not among you, that ye be not smitten before your enemies. For the Amalekites and Canaanites are there before you, and ye shall fall by the sword: because ye are turned away from the Lord, therefore the Lord will not be with you."

"But they presumed to go up unto the hill-top: nevertheless the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and Moses, departed not out of the camp. Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites, which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them even unto Hormah."[1]

What plainer admonition could we receive than that which these striking examples of God's love, of His long-suffering, and, at last, of His justice, are intended to give us? The children of Israel had sinned so often, and had so often been forgiven, that they had come to think they might do exactly as they liked, and that no murmuring and no disobedience should ever deprive them of the Land of Promise. No wonders of power made impression on them, no miracles of love touched their hard heart: neither the passage through the sea, the bread from heaven, the water from the rock, the law from Sinai, nor their lusting for flesh, and the plague that followed. All this training through mercies and judgments, during one

[1] Num. xiv.

whole year, had failed to bend their neck to the yoke of the Lord's will; but they still would have their own way. And they took it.

And it happened to them, as it invariably happens to us when we insist on having our own way in spite of God's teachings and warnings—He went not with them by the way they took. They went up the hill of their own accord and in their own strength, thus making proof neither of the courage which obedience gives, nor of the prudence of good counsel that nerves the arm and that steadies the aim; but they went up rashly, wilfully, and without forethought; neither the mercy-seat before which the Lord's enemies fled on all sides nor His prophet were with them; they went up alone. Therefore were they discomfited by their enemies, by the same Amalekites they had already beaten when the Lord fought for them; and therefore were they slain by the same Canaanites that were doomed to fall before Israel's hosts, when the Lord Himself should lead them to battle.

So also with many others in the Church of Christ, who thus do despite to the Spirit of Grace, and murmur against the Spiritual Rock, Christ, Who goes with them during their wanderings through life. Neither their baptism unto death to the world and to its pleasures, and their new birth unto righteousness to God this side the grave, nor the bread from heaven that is sent down to feed them, nor yet the Water and Blood that flows from the riven side of that Rock for their thirst and for their quickening into life everlasting; neither the commandments of God, nor the constant intercession of their High-Priest at the right hand of the mercy-seat on high, nor yet the manifold

rays of heavenly light that glint on their path and the flowers that skirt it, in the shape of mercies and blessings, nor yet the shadows of warnings and of chastisements, make any lasting impression on the hearts of very many.

Time after time do they murmur, and in their hearts turn back to Egypt and to the world, and even on the very borders of "the pleasant land," despise it, and would rather not go up. Then comes, through the biting remorse of conscience perhaps, or through the being given over to the idols so ardently loved and so long coveted, the solemn and awful message that the good land is not for them, and that in the wilderness they shall die, and come short of "the rest that remaineth for the people of God." These tidings wring the heart for an instant; the memories of past tokens of God's love and of His tender keeping for a moment flit across the mind; and a last and rash effort is made, as it were, to scale heaven by human will. But the only means offered and sanctioned were set at naught; and the way marked out thither is now lost. The mercy-seat stays behind, and the Lord is not there; and the poor wayward soul that would neither be taught, led, nor warned, falls in her next encounter with the Amalekites—with the temptations to sin that bar the way over the everlasting hills into the land of Canaan above.

CHAPTER XIV.

IN THE WILDERNESS BY THE WAY OF THE RED SEA.

I.

The sun rose behind Mount Hor, casting a lurid and dismal light on the camp of Israel, when the order was given to turn away from the good land, and to get into the wilderness—now Wady Arabah—that stretches from the southern limits of Canaan to the Red Sea at Ezion-gaber, and to walk therein. But whither? —to certain death, and this, too, by slow marches.

In the wilderness in which they had murmured and despised the promise of the land flowing with milk and honey,—in that same wilderness were they to perish. Eight-and-thirty long years were they now to spend in short and slow journeys, and frequent halts, going backwards and forwards over a country not above two hundred miles in extent; tracing their forward march with lines of human bodies on either side the track, only to retrace their steps amid the bleached bones of those that had died before them. But the sentence the children of Israel had brought on them-

selves had gone forth, "In this wilderness shall they be consumed," said the Lord, "and there they shall die." Israel was morally dead, and dying; eking out day by day, and year by year, his fearful doom, amid the burning sands and among the hot winding valleys of the desert hills; until, weary of their parched, monotonous outline, had all the murmurers laid themselves one by one on the ground to die.

These years were the grave of Israel's past history, a barren blank like the wilderness around on which the people gazed every day. Therefore do we read so little about them during that time. Only three stations are mentioned between Kadesh and Ezion-gaber on the way down seawards; and not one is recorded from Ezion-gaber back to Kadesh northwards, in the desert of Zin where Miriam died, on the first month of the fortieth year after the departure from Egypt.[1] Those eight-and-thirty years of wanderings and of death are passed over in silence, between the nineteenth and the twentieth chapters of Numbers. The sacred historian says nothing of what he could only describe as the wearing and wasting away of the people under sentence of death, and until that sentence was fully carried out.

Two or three things, however, he mentions which he could not omit. The first is, the law respecting sins of ignorance, as contrasted with sins of presumption. The priest was to make an atonement for the soul that sinned ignorantly, and it would be forgiven him;[2] but as regards "the soul that does aught presumptuously—and those Israelites had presumptuously gone up the hill towards Canaan,—the same re-

[1] Num. xx. [2] Num. xv. 27.

proacheth the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people, because he hath despised the word of the Lord, and hath broken His commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off," said the Lord; "his iniquity shall be upon him."[1] "Who can understand his errors?" says David; "cleanse Thou me from my secret faults. Keep back Thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great offence."[2] "For," says again the holy Apostle, "if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much surer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith He was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the Spirit of Grace? It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."[3]

II.

Some time also during that interval did Korah, Dathan, and Abiram's rebellion against Moses take place. "They rose up, and with them two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly—men of renown, and gathered themselves against Moses and Aaron, and said, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is

[1] V. 30. [2] Ps. xix. 12, 13. [3] Heb. x. 26–31.

among them: wherefore, then, lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?

"And Moses said unto Korah, and unto all his company, Even to-morrow the Lord will show who are His, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto Him, even him whom He hath chosen will He cause him to come near unto Him." "For which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against the Lord: and what is Aaron that ye murmur against him?"

Then Moses sent for Dathan and Abiram, but they would not come; but Korah gathered them, and all the men who were with him, against Moses, unto the door of the Tabernacle, where the glory of the Lord appeared.

"And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron, Separate yourselves from this congregation that I may destroy them in a moment." But Moses pleaded for the whole congregation, which was then told to withdraw from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, who stood at the door of their tents with their wives and children, while Moses, Aaron, and the elders of Israel spake unto them, saying, "If these men die the common death of other men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men, then the Lord hath not sent me. But if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then shall ye understand that these men have provoked the Lord."

"And it came to pass, as he made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them: and the earth opened her

mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them; and they perished from among the congregation."[1]

"And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them, for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also. And there came out a fire from the Lord, that consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense."

Such was the awful and summary judgment upon Korah. He was a Levite, and Moses' cousin, and was, also the chief instigator of this revolt against Moses and Aaron, and alone responsible for taking unto himself Dathan and Abiram, who were not Levites, and the other two hundred and fifty men who offered incense, and took part in this "gainsaying of Core," as the holy Apostle Jude calls it.[2] But as their brazen censers were consecrated—or "holy"—by having been waved before the Lord, they could no longer be turned to a secular use. Eleazar, therefore, Aaron's son was commanded to go into the midst of the burning to rescue them; and they were afterwards made into broad plates for a covering of the altar; "to be a memorial unto the children of Israel, that no stranger that is not of the seed of Aaron, come near to offer incense to the Lord; and that he be not as Korah and his company, as the Lord said to him by the hand of Moses."[3]

This was in ratification of the order before given, that "Aaron, as high-priest, and his sons alone should

[1] Num. xvi.1–33. [2] Jude 11. [3] V. 40.

wait on their priest's office: and that the stranger that came nigh should be put to death."[1] For although Korah, being a Levite, and, therefore, of those of whom the Lord had said, "I have taken them unto Myself from among the children of Israel—therefore shall they be Mine,"[1] yet, not being of the seed of Aaron, had only been given to him with the rest of the Levites, for the menial service of the Tabernacle. He therefore rose against the authority established by God, and arrogated to himself an office that did not belong to his position; while the rest of his company, not being Levites, acted profanely in taking upon themselves to counterfeit the functions which, of right, belonged to the High Priest, and to his attendants alone.

The meaning of this example is too obvious to need explanation. History, both Jewish and Gentile, both of the Temple, of the Synagogue, and of the Church, shows, to whomsoever will read, what came of those who unlawfully took to themselves the office of High Priest amongst the Jews, or the somewhat corresponding one of bishop in the Church of Christ. "No man," says the holy Apostle, "taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron."[2] Yea, even Christ did not glorify Himself to be made a high-priest, but He that said unto Him, Thou art My son, this day have I begotten Thee, and Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

But we need not go back to past history for examples of the blessing which, on the one hand, rests on those who do not "glorify themselves" by taking the

[1] Num. iii. 10. [2] Heb. v. 4.

sacred office of priest, but wait to be called of God to it; while, on the other hand, we daily see the curse that rests on those who take it upon themselves from secular motives, without being called to it by the Holy Ghost. If the fire come not down visibly from heaven, and if the earth do not open her mouth to swallow them up, the existence they drag, under the weight of responsibilities they never did, never would, and never could fulfil, and for which they have neither love nor sacred feeling, is almost a worse punishment; for it ever and anon reminds the heart of the account to be given and of the judgment to come. And as regards secular hands laid on sacred things, the civil power, stripping the Church of her property, and in any way committing sacrilege—let no one deceive himself; the hand that is thus stretched against the altar of the Lord, soon or later withers like that of Jeroboam; the property thus gotten is blighted, and those who take it are accursed. We see this every day; but men will not learn wisdom.

III.

For even on the morrow of Korah's judgment did the congregation of Israel again murmur against Moses and Aaron. No punishments seemed to terrify them into obedience; but the earth had hardly closed upon the rebellious Levite, and the smouldering ashes of his associates were yet smoking, when in the sight of this Israel murmured again. Truly the sentence of death was not too severe upon such a people. And the Lord was wroth, and told Moses and Aaron to get out from among them that He might destroy them in a moment. But Moses again stepped in as mediator

between Him and the people; and told Aaron to take a censer and run among the congregation and make atonement for them, for the plague had already begun.

"And Aaron took his censer and stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed."

What an image of our great High Priest standing between "the dead in their trespasses and sins," and those that would die but for Him, and there, by making atonement for them, staying the plague from killing the whole people! Ever and anon, whether in death or in life, are we reminded of His presence with His people in the wilderness, as we are of His presence and of His holy office as Intercessor, Mediator, and High Priest interceding for us daily, hourly, instantly at the Throne of Grace, whither He has made a way for us, and has given us boldness of access through Him. As Aaron stood between the dead and the living and the plague was stayed, so also did Christ by His atonement and intercession save His Church from being destroyed by the plague of sin, and did He give her His life, eternal with Him in the heavens.

But the dead were many—even fourteen thousand and seven hundred, beside them that died in the matter of Korah. It would seem as if the children of Israel were impatient of destruction, and that rather than eke out the span of their natural life with bread from heaven, and with water from the rock, they courted chastisements and death. Chosen though they were, they certainly did not labour, nor even try, "to make their calling and their election sure," by so obeying God's voice during their wanderings, as to reach Canaan at the last, and when there to

show that they had answered the call and were well worthy to be chosen of Him. But they heeded neither mercies nor curses; they seemed only bent on provoking the Lord to anger, "an evil and perverse generation that set not their heart aright," and that lawfully must have perished in the desert. It never could reach the Promised Land.

IV.

The rebels and the profane were punished, but the Lord's choice was not yet declared with an equal display of power, as patent to all as that shown in awarding judgment against the wicked. He now, therefore, commanded the head of every tribe to take a rod and to write upon it the name of the tribe; and upon that of Levi the name of Aaron, and to lay up all those rods in the tabernacle of the congregation before the testimony where He would meet them; and the rod of the man chosen of the Lord should blossom, so that there should be no murmurings among the people as to who was the Lord's chosen and anointed, and who was not.

And they did so, and laid up the rods in the Tabernacle of the witness. And on the morrow Moses went in, and behold "the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds." And Moses brought out all the rods, and every man looked and took his rod. And the Lord told Moses to bring back Aaron's rod and to lay it up before the testimony to be kept as a token against the rebels; to make their murmurings cease as to the authority of the High Priest; that they die not.

And Moses did so. But whether Aaron's rod brought forth almonds rather than any other fruit in token of the speedy fulfilment of God's promise, or whether the rod itself was of an almond or of some other tree, in order to render the miracle yet more remarkable, are questions I must leave to those who pretend to answer them. The object proposed was answered; and the supreme dignity of the High Priest, as figure of our Eternal High Priest, was now fully established.

But the people's wayward spirit seemed at last broken, and they came to Moses and said, "Behold, we die, we perish, we all perish. Whosoever cometh any thing near unto the Tabernacle of the Lord shall die; shall we be consumed with dying?"[1]

V.

No; the people should now no longer come rashly or inconsiderately nigh the Tabernacle of the congregation as they had done hitherto; but there should now be a regular daily service performed with sacrifices, intercession, and propitiation for them by the High Priest, the priests and the Levites set apart for that purpose. The Lord, therefore, spake to Aaron, and warned him again that high and solemn as his dignity, and sacred as his office were, higher, more awful, and more sacred than any other, yet that they were laden with the weighty, if not crushing, responsibility of bearing the iniquity of the Sanctuary; that he and his sons should bear the iniquity of their priesthood,[2] and that the Levites should be for the service of the Tabernacle only.

[1] Num. xvii. 12, 13. [2] Num. xviii.

"Ye shall keep the charge of the sanctuary, and the charge of the altar," said the Lord to Aaron and to his sons, "that there be no wrath any more upon the children of Israel. And I, behold, I have taken your brethren the Levites from among the children of Israel: to you they are given as a gift for the Lord, to do the service of the Tabernacle of the congregation."

And to Aaron He said, "Behold, I also have given thee the charge of Mine heave offerings of all the hallowed things of the children of Israel; unto thee have I given them by reason of the anointing and to thy sons, by an ordinance for ever."

"This shall be thine of the most holy things—every oblation of the people, every meat, sin, and trespass offering shall be most holy for thee and thy sons. And this is thine; the heave offering, with all the wave offerings of the children of Israel. I have given them unto thee, and to thy sons and to thy daughters with thee, by a statute for ever: every one that is clean in thy house shall eat of it. All the best of the oil, of the wine, and of the wheat, the first-fruits of them which they shall offer unto the Lord, them have I given thee; and whatever is first ripe in the land shall be thine—everything devoted unto the Lord shall be thine;—every firstling of the flock shall be thine; but the first-born of man and of unclean beasts shalt thou redeem. Yet the firstling of a cow, of a sheep, and of a goat, shalt thou not redeem, they are holy: thou shalt sprinkle their blood upon the altar, and shalt burn their fat for an offering made by fire, for a sweet savour unto the Lord. But the flesh of them shall be thine, and the wave breast and the

right shoulder are thine. All the heave offerings of the holy things, which the children of Israel offer unto the Lord, have I given thee, and thy sons and thy daughters with thee, by a statute for ever: it is a covenant of salt"—the straitest and most intimate bond—"for ever before the Lord unto thee and to thy seed with thee. Thou shalt have no inheritance in the land; neither shalt thou have any part among the people. I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel."

"And behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the Tabernacle of the congregation. They shall do the service of the Tabernacle of the congregation, and they shall bear their iniquity: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations, that among the children of Israel they have no inheritance. But the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer as an heave offering unto the Lord, I have given to the Levites to inherit: therefore I have said, among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance."

"And when they take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given them for an inheritance, then shall they offer up an heave offering of it for the Lord, even a tenth part of the tithe. And this their heave offering shall be reckoned unto them, as though it were the corn of the threshing-floor, and as the fulness of the wine-press. And ye shall eat it in every place, ye and your household: for it is your reward for your service in the tabernacle of the congregation. And ye shall bear no sin by reason of it, when ye have heaved from it the best of it; neither shall ye

pollute the holy things of the children of Israel, lest ye die."[1]

VI.

Unless one be prepared to deny all connection, even that of a shadow with the real object that casts it, between the High Priest under the law and our own High Priest under the Gospel,—between the Tabernacle and the Temple, and between that and the churches of the Christian world;—between the baptism in the Red Sea that set apart Israel as God's Church in the wilderness, and the baptism that sets apart the Church of Christ from the world;—between the manna and the Bread of heaven;—between the water from the rock and the Water of Life that flows from the Spiritual Rock, Christ;—between the lamb slain at the Passover and the Lamb of God also slain at that same time;—between the blood of that lamb that saved the house whereon it was sprinkled, and the blood of the Lamb that cleanses us from all sin, and saves us from death;—between the brazen serpent set up in the wilderness and the Son of man, Who tells us that serpent was a type of Himself;—between Canaan and "the rest that remaineth for the people of God,"—unless one deny all connection between these and many more shadows, and the bodies that cast them; between, in short, types under the law and their antitypes under the Gospel,—it is hard to conceive how any one who ever thought on the subject could for one moment deny the necessary existence of a threefold ministry in the Church of Christ, especially since it is plainly set forth under the new covenant. Nay,

[1] Num. xviii.

more; it looks like a joke, and passes the bounds of common sense, to say nothing of faith, reverence, and worship, to attempt by civil laws to do away with the responsibility that weighs on orders of the priesthood which, even when stripped of all Levitical form, yet remain indelible, "a covenant of salt" between the Lord and the priest of His sanctuary.

Doubtless, the comparison between the Levitical and the Christian priesthoods, as between the Levitical and the Christian services, cannot be more perfect than between a shadow and its object; yet such it exists. Granting, as of course we do, that the High Priest in the Tabernacle was a figure of our High Priest, Christ, Who is gone into the Holiest of all, Heaven, where He makes intercession for us, after having once made propitiation for us with His own blood; and that His priests, who do the service, offer spiritual sacrifices here on earth in His Church, which, by comparison, may be called the Holy Place or the Sanctuary; yet as regards the visible form of ecclesiastical rule and government, we cannot but see the connection between the High Priest, his subordinate priests and the Levites, and the bishop, his subordinate priests and his deacons; unless, indeed, we think that order, decency, and a solemn worship were only the shadows of disorder, indecency, and carelessness or indifference in the service of God under the Gospel. That would, indeed, be in this case, "using our freedom as a cloak for licentiousness," as it is done too often.

VII.

Likewise as regards the tenth part of the produce of land assigned to the service of the Tabernacle

in the person of the priests and Levites, who were to have no other inheritance among the tribes of Israel, in order to devote themselves to the service of the Sanctuary, free from wordly cares,—it rests on a principle of tribute to God, paid out of His own gifts, for the maintenance of His worship, without which neither man nor nation can subsist. This principle, which is older than the law, since the Apostle quotes the example of Abraham in support of it, may not be tampered with or abrogated by the recklessness, ignorance, or impiety of man, without corresponding results.

The tenth given to God sanctifies and blesses the whole; and no better bargain can be struck with Him "from Whom cometh every good gift," temporal and spiritual, than to agree to the conditions He makes. No abuse of the system of tithes by man, no pluralism, no nepotism, no fortunes made by pompous and lazy dignitaries out of the revenues of their benefices, can disannul the principle; those are abuses, sometimes, may be, criminal ones, but they are man's work, and not God's; they are man's bad use of the good which God gives, telling us "to use this world as not abusing it"—as our adversary advises us to do.

So wholly was this gift of the produce made to the High Priest and to his subordinates, that God calls it "a covenant of salt for ever before the Lord unto him and unto his seed with him."[1] Much has been written on the symbolism of salt under the Law and under the Gospel, but the way in which salt is mentioned as part of a covenant which it sanctions and makes

[1] Ch. xviii. 19.

most binding, as in Lev. ii. 13, 2 Chron. xiii. 5, seems to leave no doubt that it alludes to a custom already existing and well-known in those days, and still in use among the Arabs of the desert, whose oath is even less binding than the covenant made with a man who has eaten their bread sprinkled with salt.

This covenant or agreement between God and the High Priest, was intended to show how thoroughly the one was to live by the other and in Him, and how completely the two were to be one, in the service of the Tabernacle,—and this again, as a shadow of intimate and unbroken union between God the Father and His Son, our Eternal High Priest in the heavens. "I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel;" no more intimate fellowship could be knit, no straiter bond of union could be tied between God and man than this; neither could a man be made to feel day by day how entirely he lived and moved in God and in Him had his being. And doubtless it was God's intention thus to give us, in the anointing of the High Priest, and in His closest bond of union with him by virtue of that anointing, the plainest figure or shadow of Him Who is one with Him, God blessed for ever, and Whom He anointed both Prophet, Priest, and King, with Spirit and with power, in behalf of us for whose sakes He lived, made intercession, propitiation, and satisfaction; and in Whom and through Whom alone we are acceptable unto God. This was as regards the individual High Priest endowed with certain special prerogatives; but as regards the character and office of priests, God's intention was clearly to show that, whether under the

Law or under the Gospel, their office should not be looked upon as secular but spiritual, and that as such, they should not only bear their own iniquity, made yet greater by the nature of their calling, but that they should belong to the Lord, for the service of His Sanctuary; and therefore be maintained by a portion of His own gifts paid back to Him as a tribute of worship and honour, and of the homage due to Him alone.

Thus was provision made through the blood of bulls, and of goats, in the service of the Tabernacle, and by means of the ashes of the red heifer sprinkling the unclean for sanctification, to the purifying of the flesh—but of the flesh only;—mere shadows of good things to come, and "not the very image of the things;" rites and ceremonies that could not make the comers thereunto perfect. It was impossible for the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sins. Therefore, "sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings," said our High Priest, "and offering for sin Thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein, which are offered by the Law." "Then said He, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that He may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."[1]

[1] Heb. x.

CHAPTER XV.

RETURN TO KADESH; DEATH OF MIRIAM AND OF AARON; THE BRAZEN SERPENT.

I.

SLOWLY and surely had the desert done its work, wasting and killing the old race of murmurers, yet without having tamed the stubborn will of the remnant of them that was left, when these came back with the people to Kadesh—the scene of their former doom—in the first month of the fortieth year of their wanderings in the wilderness.

Here died Miriam, and here was she buried; here also, as if bent on filling up the tale of their murmurings to the uttermost, did the people forget their temptation in Massa, and again murmured for water here at Meribah. Again did they long for the vines, the figs, and the pomegranates of Egypt; again did they tempt the Lord, and again did He, in His patience and long-suffering, bear with them, forgive them, and give them water for their thirst. "Hear now, ye rebels," said Moses to the people assembled before him and Aaron, "must we fetch you water

of this rock?" Then, whether in anger, wrath, or doubt, he smote the rock twice with his rod, and thereby sealed his own doom and also that of Aaron. "Because ye believed Me not," said the Lord to Moses and to Aaron, "to sanctify Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them."[1]

Who would have thought that one more stroke of the rod could shut out Moses, the great prophet, the meekest of men, the lawgiver, with whom God held intercourse as a man with his friend, from the Land of Promise? Well, then may the holy Apostle warn us "to fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of us should seem to come short of of it;"[2] or even, lest, "after having preached unto others, we ourselves be cast away." So jealous is God of the honour due to Him, that a breach therein, even though forgiven, as in the case of His servant Moses, nevertheless entails on the sinner a more or less severe punishment; and that, too, soon or later.

Hence, from Kadesh, Moses sent messengers to the king of Edom, to ask leave for Israel to pass through his land; but the King of Edom refused. Moses pleaded kindred for Israel, but the descendant of Esau, who ruled in Seir, and acknowledged no kindred of the sort, simply replied, that if Israel ventured through his land, he would come out against him with the sword. "Wherefore Israel turned away from him, and journeyed from Kadesh, and came to Mount Hor"—the goal of Aaron's life.

Because he had shared in the rebellion at Meribah,

[1] Num. xx. [2] Heb. iv. 1.

or, may be, because he had not boldly quelled it as he, High Priest of the Lord, had power and authority to do, was he told that here, in Mount Hor, he should die. In the presence of the congregation of Israel then, did Moses, Aaron, and Eleazar his son, go up the mount; Aaron never to return; but Moses, to strip him of his priestly garments, and to invest Eleazar with them, and with the dignity and prerogatives of the High Priest's office. "Aaron died there on the top of the mount; and Moses and Eleazar came down from it; and when Israel saw that Aaron was dead, they mourned for him thirty days."

Meanwhile, King Arad, the Canaanite, who dwelt in the south, "heard that Israel came by the way of the spies,"[1] who had spied the land eight-and-thirty years before, and he fought against him and took some prisoners. But the children of Israel, made wiser by the defeat their fathers had suffered in the same district, and under similar circumstances, did not, this time, rashly go forth against the hosts of Canaan, but "vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, If Thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their cities. And the Lord hearkened to the voice of Israel and delivered up the Canaanites, and they utterly destroyed them and their cities, and he called the name of the place Hormah, or "utter destruction,"—the very place at which Israel had been routed and cut to pieces in the first attempt to enter the land of Canaan against God's order.

What plainer proof could He give them that it was neither their own arm nor their own strength that should win them the land, but that the land being

[1] Num. xxi. 1.

His, He would drive their enemies from before them, and give them their land as He had promised? When they went up against the Canaanites without God's consent, their enemies beat them; but when in the same spot they consulted the Lord, and sought His aid, those same enemies were discomfited. And in either case, the rout was remembered in the name "utter destruction" given to the field of battle,—utter destruction, either of man fighting against his spiritual enemies in his own strength, with his philosophy and his fanciful resolutions, or of those same adversaries of the Christian knight in his spiritual warfare, when, clad in the whole armour of God, he bows in Sacrament to the Captain of his Salvation, and then in His name sallies forth to battle. He then fights in God's name, and in His name conquers. Every soldier of Christ, every child of God, may set up either his Beth-el or his Eben-ezer, at many a station of his earthly pilgrimage; but may he not also remember many a Hormah where he either overcame temptation, or was overcome by it?

II.

However, not even this success over Arad and his men did give Israel courage. It might have been to them a pledge of the victories that awaited them, in the land now at hand, the southern borders of which they had already trodden. But they were weary of the way. Nine-and-thirty years had they been wandering in the wilderness, during which, children had grown up, others were born, youth had grown old, manhood had become hoary, and about six hundred thousand men had also died. The high

hand and stretched out arm that brought them out of Egypt, and all the wonders that followed unto that day, had no effect even upon this second generation.

These, too, murmured; and when, forbidden to go the short way through Edom, they were sent a second time by the way of the Red Sea, to compass the land of Edom, "the soul of the people was much discouraged, because of the way, and the people spake against God and against Moses." As at Taberah the fathers had grumbled at being deprived of the fruit and vegetables of Egypt, and at having naught "but manna before their eyes," so, also, did their children, eight-and-thirty years after, add yet to their parents' words, and said, "Our soul loatheth this light bread;"—they loathed the bread given them from heaven. So, also, as at Taberah the wrath of God was kindled against the fathers, did He here, at Salmonah, in His just displeasure, punish the children for their murmurings, by sending among them fiery serpents, that bit them, so that much people of Israel died.

Then came they to Moses, and said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against thee; pray unto the Lord, that He take away the serpents from us." And Moses prayed for the people. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole, and it shall come to pass that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.

"And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."

That was indeed an example to them; yea, and an admonition to us also.[1]

For, "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness," said He Who went about with the people there, "even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life."[2]

The poor Israelite who, when bitten, felt the deadly venom of the reptile creep like fire in his veins, throb a while with burning heat, and then slacken until it ceased in the chill of death, had there a Saviour given him on whom he had only to look in faith to be saved from death. If even in the last agonies of the disease, if when in the final fitful throes of death, he but turned his livid countenance and closing eyes in faith in God's word towards that serpent of brass, death fled at once; his drooping eyelids opened to the tidings of life which he felt spreading over his dying frame; his quivering lips now began to articulate plain, and his limbs, already stiffened, began to move and to show that life had overcome death, that health was returning, and that the body that was doomed to perish was now told to live.

Fathers who were thus saved from death, brought their children within sight of the Saviour thus lifted up, and bid them—Look that way! Mothers who, when all hope for them was gone, had clasped their babes to their shivering bosom, now, when restored to

[1] "A mystery or sacrament," says Justin Martyr (Dial. c. Tryph. p. 322), "wherein Moses proclaimed Him by Whom the power of the serpent who had caused Adam's transgression was to be destroyed; and that salvation was promised to those who believed in Him through the sign thus set up."

[2] S. John iii. 14.

life, held up these same little ones towards that from which life had come to them, breathing forth—Oh, save also my babe! Husbands held their wives, wives their husbands, children their father or their mother, youths the maidens to whom they were betrothed, and maidens also those to whom their love was pledged,—all turned their eyes, their looks, and centred their hopes on that one figure—figure of the same serpent that had smitten them to death, set up by God, and by God gifted with a virtue of healing over which death itself had no power.

What brought them? What made them thus look unto that serpent thus lifted up at God's behest by His servant?—They knew they were bitten, and they felt they were dying. They did not reason long about it, trying to prove that the bite was either a mistake or an accident, and that they would cure themselves with their own remedies, or at all events, not die. No. They felt they were doomed to death through the venomous bite of the serpent; they knew there was no more hope for them than for the dead or the dying around; but they believed the testimony God gave of that one set up to save. He said, Look on him, and thou shalt be saved. They that believed looked on him and were saved; those who did not believe, did not look, and died. There was in the Saviour thus set up, virtue to save the whole of them that were bitten, if all had obeyed the call to look that way: some did, others did not; those who did were alone saved—and saved by faith. Faith, in them, came by hearing the call; the work of that faith was to obey that call; and the end of it was—to live.

But who were they? Of the six hundred and

three thousand five hundred and fifty men whom Moses reckoned in the wilderness of Sinai, in the second month of the second year after they left Egypt,[1] there would in a month or two, perhaps, remain only two, namely, Caleb and Joshua, among the six hundred and one thousand seven hundred and thirty numbered by Moses in the plains of Moab. The children of Israel, then, were now altogether a new generation, yet, like their fathers, still "the people of God," or, rather, perhaps, more correctly, "the Church in the Wilderness."

What, then, constituted it such, and what severed it from the Canaanites, the Edomites, and the Moabites around? Not one of this new generation of Israelites born in the wilderness was circumcised,[2] notwithstanding God's commandment to Abraham and His declaring to him that every "man of his children that should remain uncircumcised should be cut off from the people;[3] for he thus brake God's covenant." How, then, could God bear with them so long, thus outside this covenant with Him? Only because they were in a spiritual covenant with Him through their baptism in the sea and in the cloud. Circumcision was, so to speak, the mark of a civil covenant with God, and as long as there was no Law, and God had as yet no people which He could make a nation to place Himself at the head of it,—that is, during the patriarchal dispensation,—so long also was the token of circumcision, as the seal of righteousness which is by faith, alone necessary and alone instituted.

But when God brought out of Egypt the children of Israel, six hundred thousand and more, and had to

[1] Num. i. 46. [2] Josh. v. 7, 8. [3] Gen. xvii. 14.

constitute them both His Church and His people or nation at one and the same time, He added to the sign of His covenant with Abraham and his posterity that made it God's people as being Abraham's children, the rite of a spiritual and yet better covenant that made the people of Israel "His Church in the Wilderness," namely, "the baptism unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." And it was by virtue of this rite, first instituted at the passage of the Red Sea, and afterwards daily continued in the cloud, that the Israelites who were not circumcised in the wilderness still continued in covenant with God, being by Him fed from heaven and watered from the rock like their fathers, and, like them, also led by Him towards the Land of Promise. For it was not until they reached that land, where God intended them to abide for ever under His government and rule as their King, that the token of His covenant with Abraham was renewed in the person of his children.

But, if being baptized in the cloud and in the sea did not save the first generation of Israelites from murmuring in the wilderness, and from dying there in consequence of their murmurings, neither did it save the second generation from murmuring against God, and being punished with fiery serpents, nor yet from joining themselves unto idols at Baal-Peor, and there dying of the plague, in number twenty-four thousand.

So then, as their saying, "We have Abraham to our father," and their being in a spiritual covenant with God did not save them from sin, and death in the wilderness, and from coming short of "that good land,"—in vain shall we claim our having been in covenant with God through baptism, if we have not

the spirit and life of which that water is only a pledge or token. For it is not "the putting away of the filth of the flesh that saves us, but the answer of a good conscience."[1] And this can neither be received nor purchased. It is the result of our walk in life with God, through His Spirit in us; in other words, it is the righteousness of Abraham, who by his works made his faith perfect.

III.

Having compassed the southern borders of the land of Edom, the children of Israel again moved northwards from the neighbourhood of the Red Sea, by the wilderness that spreads eastward of the high table-land of Moab, until they came to Bamoth and Pisgah. Here Moses sent messengers to Sihon, king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, among the hills that rise over against Jericho, eastward of Jordan, asking him to let Israel pass through his land. But Sihon would not suffer Israel to pass, but came out against him with his army, and was defeated with great slaughter. Then Israel possessed his land from the river Arnon to the Jabbok, even unto the border of the children of Ammon, and dwelt therein,[2] after a signal victory, sung for ever after in the ancient lays of the land.[3] Flushed with this victory, Israel pushed forward into the beautiful hills of Bashan, fought Og, the king thereof, at Edrei, and possessed also his land —a land rich in pastures, and well wooded; a land of rivers and of brooks, of beauty and of plenty, in real contrast to the hot and thirsty wilderness in which Israel had spent his weary life-time.

[1] 1 Pet. iii. 21. [2] Num. xxi. 21–24. [3] V. 27–30.

Having thus taken possession of the territory that was to belong to the tribe of Reuben, to that of Gad, and to half of that of Manasseh, Moses set again forward and brought the children of Israel to the plains of Moab over against Jericho, where they pitched their camp, for the last time, amid the rich, green, sunny meads of the lea of Jordan; at the foot of Harim, and on the threshold of that good land, the land of Lebanon.

CHAPTER XVI.

BALAK, THE KING OF MOAB, SENDS FOR BALAAM; JOSHUA IS APPOINTED TO SUCCEED MOSES; DEFEAT OF THE MIDIANITES.

1.

And Balak, the son of Zippor, king of Moab, saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites, and he became sore afraid for himself and his people. He then made common cause against him with Midian; and, lest their joint hosts should not prevail in fight, he sent for Balaam, the son of Beor, a soothsayer of renown, who was then living at Pethor, in Mesopotamia,[1] to come and curse for him the children of Israel, as a preparatory rite to the battle.

So the elders of Moab, and those of Midian, departed and came to Balaam with Balak's message, and the rewards of divination in their hands—regal presents—which, like a "precious stone,"[2] caught Balaam's eyes whithersoever they turned, made room for the messengers into his presence and for their words into the recesses of his heart. "Lodge here this night,"

[1] Num. xxiii. 7; Deut. xxiii. 4.

[2] Prov. xvii. 8.

said Balaam to them, "and I will bring you word again, as the Lord shall speak unto me."[1] And they tarried there that night.

"And God came unto Balaam and said, What men are these with thee? And Balaam said unto God, Balak, the son of Zippor, king of Moab, hath sent unto me, saying, Behold there is a people come out of Egypt which covereth the face of the earth: come now, curse me them; peradventure I shall be able to overcome them, and drive them out.

"And God said unto Balaam, Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed.

"And Balaam rose up in the morning and said unto the princes of Balak, Get you into your land: for the Lord refuseth to give me leave to go with you. And the princes of Moab rose up, and they went unto Balak and said, Balaam refuseth to come with us."[2]

Thus ended the first interview between the Midianite princes and the prophet of Pethor. Although "he loved the wages of unrighteousness," yet the traditions that hung over the hills of Aram, where he lived,[3] forbad him, for the nonce, to yield to Balak's entreaties, whether or not he took his presents. The princes of Moab could not make out what the Lord had to do with it it; was all Chemosh to them. All they did understand was, that Balaam would not come; and they said so to their king.

Like them, Balak did not see what could outweigh his reasons with Balaam; he therefore sent other princes yet more honourable than they, with fairer promises of yet greater honour and distinction, if only

[1] Prov. xviii. 16. [2] Num. xxii. 1-14. [3] Ch. xxiii. 7.

he would come. Again to these Balaam replied, "If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of my God, to do less or more."

Another good answer; but, was it sincere? "Now therefore," said Balaam, "I pray you tarry ye also here this night, that I may know what the Lord will say unto me more." Perhaps I may go with you, after all.

"And God came unto Balaam at night, and said unto him, If the men come to call thee, rise up, and go with them; but yet the word which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do. And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab."

He now had his own way; Balak's promises of honours, and the prospect that loomed in the distance, of being a dignitary among the Moabites, was too good for Balaam to be so easily lost; some means or other might be devised to please both parties—Balak and his conscience, the Lord and Chemosh. These were no times for being too particular; nay, he was in advance of Noah, of Abraham, even of Melchizedek, and, after all, "the Lord" of Aram and Chemosh, or Baal of Moab, were but different names for the same powers in nature, and might all be embraced in one wide, easy worship.

So Balaam went with the princes of Moab. "Nevertheless, God's anger was kindled because he went: and the angel of the Lord stood in the way for an adversary against him." Strange that God should have been angry with Balaam if he went when God told him to go! But God then only gave him his

heart's desire: Balaam wished to go; otherwise he would not have asked Balak's messengers to tarry with him a second time. And he was not honest, in either saying "yes" or "no" to the Midianitish emissaries, therefore did God withstand him, and send His angel to bar him the way—first, in one place where Balaam's ass, that saw the angel, did turn aside; then further, in a narrower way, where the ass again endeavoured to avoid the angel by crouching against the wall; and a third time, yet further on, in a place narrower still, where the ass could not escape, and where the Lord opened her mouth to "forbid the madness of the prophet;" thus rebuking him for his iniquity.[1]

And when Balaam's eyes were opened, "and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand, he bowed down his head and fell flat on his face. And he said unto the angel, I have sinned; for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me: now, therefore, if it displease thee I will get me back again." But the angel of the Lord bade him go with the princes; only, that he should speak the words of the Lord, and no others.

And when Balak heard that Balaam was come, he went in state to meet him at a city of Moab, to pay him all due respect, and also to expostulate with him for his slowness in coming.

"Here I am, said Balaam;" nevertheless, "the word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak." The figure of the angel with his drawn sword haunted him yet; and, what between the thought of Balak's

[1] 2 Pet. ii. 16.

promises, the remorse of his conscience, and the feeling that if he told the truth he would lose Balak's favour, but that if he did not tell it he would be subject to God's anger—made him wish he had never left Pethor, even with princes, for the court of Moab, and for the promises of the king.

II.

The sun was rising in all the brightness of a cloudless Eastern sky, and tipping one by one the lofty hills of Moab, and of Canaan beyond, when Balak rode up to the high places of Baal, with his wild escort of desert chieftains gaily attired in their gaudy trappings, and Balaam among them riding on his ass.

"Build me here seven altars," said Balaam to Balak, "and offer on every one of them a bullock and a ram, and stand by thy sacrifice while I go yonder and hear what the Lord shall say unto me."

Balak did as he was told, and Balaam went and returned, and blessed the multitude of Israel that spread like locusts in the plain below. "How shall I curse whom God hath blessed? or how shall I defy whom the Lord hath not defied? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." Such was the result of Balak's sacrifice, and of his hope of succour from Balaam.

"What hast thou done unto me?" said the king to the prophet. "I took thee to curse mine enemies, and behold, thou hast blessed them altogether. Come, I pray thee, with me unto another place, whence thou shalt not see them all, but only a part of them; and curse me at least that portion of them."

So they came to the top of Pisgah, where they offered the sacrifices of divination as before, and where Balaam also went to meet the Lord.

When he returned, Balak asked him, "What hath the Lord spoken?"

"Rise up, Balak, and hear," said Balaam; "hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor: God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man that He should repent. Behold, I have received commandment to bless; and He hath blessed, and I cannot revert it."

Balak, astonished at this address, and at the turn things were now taking, contrary to his wishes, and to the manner in which Baal and Chemosh had always served him before, and unable to enter into Balaam's outpourings of future events, like a king, cut the matter short, and said to Balaam, "Neither curse them at all," since I cannot get that, "nor bless them at all," lest I fare worse than I have yet done. "Come, I pray thee, I will bring thee unto another place; peradventure it will please God that thou mayest curse me them from thence."

The simplicity of this Moabitish king might form a subject for useful study of the human mind, were it not that the same extraordinary mode of reasoning is found in more modern times and among men who do not live beyond Jordan. The idea that God's blessing or cursing of Israel depended on the portion of the people seen from a particular spot, was, on the part of Balak, not a bit worse than the sentiments often put forth with pompous arrogance by certain men, Christians as they are called, who write and talk publicly and privately of the word of the Lord, of the Church, and of things belonging to her, exactly as if

she were their creature, tool, or institute, and as if the spirit of her institutions, and the life that is in her, even though her form may decay, were of human make, and subject to the whims and fancies of men.

Let the Balaks of the day look at the Church of Christ from whatever end they please, and bring their Erastian prophets to the top of any Pisgah, or even to high places of Baal, and let them, when there, seek their enchantments. Yet even they cannot curse her "whom the Lord hath blessed," and even they must, while grasping the king's rewards in their hands, say, "Thou art blessed: let me die the death of the righteous, and let my latter end be like unto theirs."

So they came "to the top of Peor, that looketh towards Jeshimon," and there, also, for the third time, did they build their altars and offer their sacrifices. But Balaam, seeing it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, went not, as at other times, to seek for enchantments, but set his face towards the wilderness, and when he saw Israel abiding in his tents according to their tribes, the Spirit of God came upon him, and he took up his parable, and said:—

"How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! As the valleys are they spread forth as gardens by the river's side, as the trees of lign aloes which the Lord hath planted and as cedar-trees beside the waters."

A beautiful description, especially when told in Balaam's language, of the scenery beheld from the heights on which he stood; whence green valleys and water-courses, edged with oleanders in bloom, wind down into the plain of Moab, strewed of yore, as at present, with fresh verdure, even in the heat of

summer. If the sun was rising when Balaam came up to Peor, when the morning shadows of the heights of Abarim, and of the hills of Heshbon, sweep across the lea of Jordan, and streak it with shade, and with gleams of brilliant sunshine, no wonder that even Balaam, who was used to such sights among the blue hills of his country, should exclaim, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob—as valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river's side"—when Israel lay below, on the plain yclept "the garden of the Lord." Yea, "blessed is he," O people of God, "that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee!"

Balak never bargained for this when he sent his regal rewards of divination to Balaam, by the hands of his princes; "his anger, therefore, was kindled against Balaam, and he smote his hands together and said to Balaam, I called thee to curse mine enemies, and behold, thou hast altogether blessed them these three times! Therefore, now, flee thou to thy place: I thought to promote thee unto great honour; but lo, the Lord hath kept thee back from honour."

The same arrangement and the same language hold good now-a-days. The regal rewards of divination and honours, are also given to those who are hired to please the enemies of the Church; but the Balaams of to-day are not so teachable as he of yore;[1] they mind neither the angel of the Lord in the way, nor even the truth spoken by an ass, but they ask Balak what they shall say, and say it for their money. Good were it, if some of them had the cour-

[1] Who, according to tradition, held at the court of Pharaoh the same office as did Potiphar, and withal, was father of Jannes and of Jambres.

age and honesty of him of Pethor, and said, "If Balaam would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the commandment of the Lord, to do either good or bad of mine own mind; but what the Lord saith, that I will speak." Nevertheless, even he loved the wages of unrighteousness, and was not upright in his walk before God.

"So Balaam rose up, and went and returned to his place; and Balak also went his way."

III.

And the children of Israel abode in Shittim, in the evil company of the Moabites, who allured them to the sacrifices of Baal and of Chemosh, and to their licentious rites. The anger of the Lord was then kindled against Israel, and the dire sentence went forth:—

"Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the Lord against the sun, that the fierce anger of the Lord may be turned away from Israel. And Moses said to the judges of Israel, Slay ye every one his man that were joined unto Baal-peor. And those that died of the plague, were twenty and four thousand"—perhaps, the last remnant of those who were never to enter into the good land they had despised.

But Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the High Priest, by his zeal for the Lord, stayed the Divine anger against the people, and arrested the plague; and for this—"because he was zealous for My sake among the children of Israel," said the Lord, "that I consumed them not in My jealousy, behold, I give unto him My covenant of peace: and he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting

priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel."

And why are the Priests of the Lord set apart, or sanctified, but to be zealous for Him and earnest in His service; to make atonement, that is, to intercede for His people, and to stay among them the plague of sin in every shape, of which more than twenty-four thousand die daily? But where are, at present, the really zealous men? Not zealous without knowledge, nor yet zealous in pushing themselves forward and in forcing their own ideas on others, but zealous for the Lord and for the truth of His Word, without any thought for their own selves?

Some there are, no doubt; but they are few, very few; love for God waxes colder and colder, and faith grows less and less; "every man seeketh his own," and things look, not as if the sons of Phinehas were staying God's wrath by their earnestness and zeal for Him, but rather, as if His anger were arising, and He were about to visit His Church with sore and fearful judgments.

Beset as she is with Midianites on every side, and split within herself into factions and divisions and dissensions, a man now hardly knows his brother. The plague is raging, but where is the Phinehas, who may think the Lord's everlasting covenant of peace with Him a sufficient reward for his earnestness and zeal, in waving the standard of the Cross from the heights of England's Abarim, and blowing thence the trumpet with no uncertain sound, but in the name of Christ alone and for His Church only?

Now is the time; but where is the man? If one have judgment, he has little or no zeal; if another be

zealous, it is without knowledge: meanwhile there is no master-mind to rally men around him as a leader of the Lord's battles. Would-be councils of war end in talk, or in meting out either red tape or red ribbon, as the case may be; we ask for advice or direction, but there is none to give it—no one to guide us; and dressed as we are, every man according to his fancy, we present the appearance, not so much of the tight ranks of a well-ordered army, under able generals, as that of a band of disorderlies, without plan of action, without leader, either doing nothing or fighting as if beating the air. And yet the greatest interests are at stake, matters of life and death to the Church of England hang in the balance, which the zeal, the courage, and the faith of a Phinehas might weigh on God's side, but which, from want of him, may be lost for ever. "One man who approves himself by his faithful conduct," says S. Athanasius,[1] "is worthy of more honour than ten thousand men who presume on their own arrogance, as we find it in the Old Testament, where we read of the thousands that died in the plague sent by God, when Phinehas alone stood up and made atonement and stayed the destruction. Had he, however, said, How shall I venture in opposition to things allowed by such men? or, how shall I thus openly show my disapprobation of the kind of life they have chosen for themselves? he never would have excelled; he never would have stayed the evil; the rest of the people would not have been spared,

[1] In a letter addressed "to those who judge of the Truth by the opinion of the multitude" (Opp. ii. 293, *seq.*), that seems written for the present time. The following letter, *πρὸς τοὺς κελευόντας μὴ δεῖν ἀπὸ γραφῶν ζητεῖν ἢ λαλεῖν, ἀρκουμένους τῇ παρ' αὐτοῖς πίστει*, is also much to the point.

and God would not have given him His blessing. It is good, yea, it is great, in one man to show himself righteous, and thereby to dissolve the unrighteous concord of the many."

IV.

But to Israel. "Vex the Midianites and smite them," said the Lord to Moses, "for they vex you with their wiles, wherewith they beguiled you in the matter of Peor, and in that of Cozbi, the daughter of a prince of Midian."

While resting on the plains of Moab, from the forty years' wanderings in the hot and dry wilderness, and about to enter into the land so long promised, and so long also looked to, Israel was led astray by the wiles of the Midianites, and lured to the sacrifices of their gods. So now also with the Church, whether we look at her in general, or at her in particular, in this country. While waiting, as her sons always are, at the entrance of the heavenly Canaan, and on the eve of going in at her gates, how many of them, instead of holding fast by God, until He bring them there, furbishing their weapons for the conquest, on the watch, resting on the shield of faith, with the drawn sword of the Spirit in hand—are lured aside by Midianitish wiles, are thus turned aside from that good land, and think scorn of it, on this side Jordan! They barter their swords for maniples, and their armour for cloaks and vestments of Midianitish make; caught as they are by the colour of dress that is of more honour than the Spirit, and by foreign trinkets of greater value than their own ornaments of the purest gold. They weave their own web; what,

then, if they be caught in the toils they have set themselves, and leave Israel for Midian?

When the plague was over—that must have been a happy time—Moses and Eleazar were commanded to take the sum of the people, from twenty years old and upwards, all in Israel that were able to go to war, and they numbered them according to their tribes, in all six hundred and one thousand seven hundred and thirty.

Unto these was the land to be divided by lot, according to the number of their names; "between many and few. Besides these there were twenty-three thousand Levites, all males, from a month old and upward, that were not numbered among the children of Israel, because there was no inheritance given them among their brethren, the Lord was their inheritance. But among all those there was not a man of them whom Moses and Aaron, the priest, numbered in the wilderness of Sinai, for the Lord had said of them, They shall surely die in the wilderness. And there was not a man of them left, save Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua, the son of Nun."[1]

This, then, was the host of Israel that was to go in and possess the land,—a host, let it be remembered, not circumcised, but baptized—uncircumcised Israelites, in short, and thus virtually cut off from that covenant with God, but, as we shall see, baptized followers of Joshua, also called Jesus.[2]

For Moses could not have led them over Jordan into Canaan. He brought Israel to the borders of the land, but the Law never could have brought the people of God into possession of His kingdom above. "The

[1] Num. xxvi. [2] Heb. iv. 8.

letter" of the Law "killeth; but the Spirit" of JESUS alone giveth life," and alone brings those that are His, that march after Him, the Captain of their Salvation, into the kingdom He has won for them.

Therefore, said God to Moses, "Get thee up into this mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given unto the children of Israel: and when thou hast seen it thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron, thy brother, was gathered."[1] Moses then went up; and when he saw the snows of Hermon and the green hills of Canaan spread out before him on the other side the plain through which the Jordan flows, edged with trees always green from the freshness of its banks—the land he had longed to see during the forty weary years of toil and contradiction in the wilderness, he besought the Lord, and said, "O Lord God, I pray Thee let me go over and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain and Lebanon!"

But the Lord would not hear him. "Let it suffice thee," said He; "speak no more unto Me of this matter; but lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold it with thine eyes; for thou shalt not go over this Jordan."[2]

V.

"Then Moses spake unto the Lord, saying, Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, which may go out and go in before them, and which may lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep without a shepherd.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua,

[1] Num. xxvii. 12. [2] Deut. iii. 25, 27.

the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay thine hand upon him, and set him before Eleazar, the priest, and before all the congregation; and give him a charge in their sight. And thou shalt put some of thine honour upon him, that all the congregation of Israel may be obedient. And he shall stand before Eleazar, the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of Urim before the Lord: at his word they shall go out, and at his word they shall come in, both he and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation."

"And Moses did as the Lord commanded him; and he took Joshua, and set him before Eleazar, the priest, and before all the congregation. And he laid his hands upon him, and gave him a charge, as the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses."

Further the Law could not go. The shadows of good things to come, intended to teach the children of Israel, would have failed, had Moses, who was both lawgiver and a Levite, brought them into the Land of Promise; seeing that neither the Law, in that it is "weak through the flesh," nor the Levitical Priesthood, that was only a shadow of heavenly things, made the comers thereunto perfect. And the perfection or completion of this period of shadows, of those good heavenly things to come, was the entrance into Canaan; a figure of the heavenly kingdom whither the Church of Christ is tending, and on the threshold of which she actually stands, since "His family in heaven and in earth is named."

The sentence of exclusion from Canaan given on Moses and Aaron for having rebelled at Meribah was doubtless just and right since God gave it; but we must see that even without it, they could not have brought

the people over Jordan into the Land of Promise. As JESUS of Judah overcame death for His Church, and for her also rent asunder the bands of the grave, after having taken out of the way the Law that was against her by fulfilling it entirely—so also did the Law in the person of Moses stop short of Jordan, which was the emblem of the grave, and of death that severs this wilderness world from heaven; and therefore also was it left for Jesus of Ephraim, Joshua, to rend asunder the flood of Jordan and to bid the waters of destruction stand back until the people of God had passed.

A sad and solemn hour at which the aged Moses, he who had conversed with God, and had wrought wonders in His name, stood at even in presence of the people assembled under the heights of Abarim, to make over to Joshua the future command of the people. Looking towards that good land, on which the sun then sinking in the west was casting a rich, mellowed light that stretched the long, blue shadows of the hills of Canaan over the plain—

"Thither, said he to Joshua, I may not go; but thither shalt thou take the people of God. Thine eyes have seen all that the Lord your God hath done to these two kings, Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan; so also shall the Lord do unto all the kingdoms whither thou passest. Ye shall not fear them: for the Lord your God, He shall fight for you.[1] Be strong and of good courage; the Strength of Israel cannot lie; the Lord of Hosts is His name. He shall go before thee to scatter thine enemies, and He shall be Thy rereward to guard thee from evil. He hath promised, and His word is truth, to give you

[1] Deut. iii. 21, 22.

that good land which ye see yonder, as an everlasting inheritance.

Many a tear glistened on the sunburnt cheek of the warriors that stood around, resting on their spears, at the thought that he who had been with them so long, who had brought them through the wilderness, against whom they had so often murmured, and who, as often, had pleaded with God in their behalf, was about to leave them. It was for them the breaking off with a tried friend for an unknown future; the parting from him who had hitherto been the mainstay of their existence through great and sore trials, and who had at last brought them to the goal of their pilgrimage, to the gates of Canaan. Many a heart that before had murmured, now beat with sorrow, and many a bosom heaved a sigh of regret when Moses spake. And the multitude lifted up their voice, and for his sake promised him obedience to Joshua.

VI.

The rich pastures of Heshbon, the fertile territory of Bashan, and the cornfields of Salcah, were already conquered; Sihon and Og were both slain, and their land lay in store for Reuben, for Gad, and for a portion of Manasseh. But there was one last battle to be fought on this side Jordan by Moses ere he resigned the command into the hands of Joshua. "Avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites," said God to Moses; "afterward shalt thou be gathered unto thy people."

Then Moses chose a thousand men out of every tribe—twelve thousand in all—whom he sent with

"Phinehas and the holy instruments against the Midianites, whom they defeated. They slew all the men, and the five kings of Midian; and Balaam also, the soothsayer, they put to death with the sword. And they brought much spoil to the camp to Moses and to Eleazar, with the women they had taken captive. But Moses commanded all the women among them, who had caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the Lord, to be put to death; but all others they might save alive. And of the jewels of gold and of silver that were taken from the Midianites, the captains of thousands offered unto the Lord sixteen thousand seven hundred and fifty shekels, which Moses and Eleazar brought into the Tabernacle of the congregation for a memorial before the Lord.

Then the tribe of Reuben, the tribe of Gad, and the half of the tribe of Manasseh, received at the hand of Moses their inheritance on this side Jordan, the lot of the land taken from Sihon, the king of the Amorites, and from Og, the king of Bashan, on condition that they should leave their wives and cattle in their cities, and pass over with their brethren into Canaan and help them to conquer the land from north to south, according to the limits drawn by Moses himself.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE PARTING WORDS OF MOSES TO THE PEOPLE.

I.

"And it came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that Moses spake unto the children of Israel, according to all that the Lord had given him in commandment unto them."[1] On this side Jordan, in the land of Moab, did Moses, the Man of God, address them for the last time. He repeated to them over again the laws he had already given them, and charged them in the most solemn terms to remember those laws, and to do them.

"Remember, O Israel, said Moses, all that the Lord thy God has done unto thee." How "He chose thee to be a peculiar people unto Himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth." How He brought thee out of Egypt with a mighty hand and a stretched-out arm; and through the Red Sea to Horeb, the mount of God, where ye abode many days; where

[1] Deut. i.

He spake to you from the mount and gave you His law.

"And how He brought you through that great and terrible wilderness wherein He fed you with manna and gave you water to drink, and bare you as a man doth bear his son, all the way that ye went until ye came to this place."

"And yet how ye disbelieved His word, how ye murmured against Him, and despised that good land while you were on the border thereof, and refused to go up and take it, when He declared that those who had thus mistrusted Him should never see that land, but die in the wilderness; so that not one of them is here this day to go in and possess the land flowing with milk and honey He had promised, save Joshua, the son of Nun, and Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, because he wholly followed the Lord."

"Nay, the Lord was angry with me also for your sakes, and said that I should not go in thither, but that I should die here, within sight of it.

"And ye know how your fathers presumed to go up after the Lord had forbidden them to do so; how I warned them that they would perish by the hand of their enemies, because the Lord was not with them; and ye remember how they still would go up, and were slain, with great slaughter, by the Amorites of the south.

"Then, after having dwelt in Kadesh many days we turned by the way of the Red Sea, and compassed Mount Seir for a long time, until we came up from the plain of Elath and of Ezion-gaber, by the way of the wilderness of Moab unto the brook Zered, where the last of the men of war died, and the thirty-eight

years of our wanderings since we left Kadesh Barnea at the first, were ended. For indeed the hand of the Lord was against those men to destroy them."

"And when they were all dead, the Lord said unto me, 'Rise up, pass over the river Arnon; behold, I have given into thy hand Sihon, the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land; begin to possess it, and contend with him in battle. This day will I put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the nations that are under the whole heaven, and they shall tremble because of thee.'

"I therefore sent from Kedemoth messengers unto Sihon, king of Heshbon, to ask him to let us pass through his land, but he would not, but came out against us and fought us; then we gave him battle, the Lord delivered him into our hands, and said unto me, 'Begin to possess that thou mayest inherit his land.' So we took all his cities and the spoil that was in them, from Aroer, that is by the brook Arnon, even unto Gilead; not one of them was too strong for us, because the Lord was on our side and fought for us."

II.

"Then we turned and went up the way to Bashan, and Og, the king of Bashan, came out against us. But the Lord said unto me, Fear him not; as thou didst unto Sihon, king of Heshbon, so shalt thou do unto him. We then took his cities and left none of his people remaining, and possessed his land unto Salcah and Edrei; so that we now have as part of our inheritance all the land of the Amorites this side Jordan, from the river Arnon unto Hermon in the north,

and all Gilead and the cities of the plain; the land I have given by lot unto the tribe of Reuben, of Gad, and unto half that of Manasseh for their inheritance for ever.

"And when the Lord had given us rest from these enemies, I commanded Joshua, saying, Thine eyes have seen all that the Lord your God hath done unto these two kings: so shall the Lord do unto all the kingdoms whither thou passest. Ye shall not fear them; for the Lord your God He shall fight for you."

"And I earnestly besought the Lord at that time, saying, O Lord, Thou hast begun to show Thy servant Thy greatness and Thy mighty hand. I pray Thee let me go over and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon."

"But the Lord was wroth with me for your sakes, and would not hearken unto my prayer. I must die in this land; I must not go over Jordan; but ye and Joshua, in whom is the Spirit, and on whom I have placed mine honour, and to whom I have given a charge in your presence, he who now stands at my right hand before you, shall go over and possess that good land. Take heed unto yourselves, therefore, lest ye forget the covenant of your God. For He is a consuming fire and a jealous God.

"O Israel, the Lord thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thy hand: He knoweth thy walking through this great wilderness: these forty years the Lord thy God hath been with thee, thou hast lacked nothing.[1] He fed thee with bread from heaven, and gave thee water for thy thirst; He led thee by day with the cloud, and by night with a light of fire; thy

[1] Deut. ii. 7.

clothes waxed not old upon thee, nor thy shoe upon thy foot: because the Lord was with thee, to love thee, to guide thee, to watch over thee, to try thee, and to humble thee; to see what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst serve Him or no, and to do thee good at thy latter end. For He is long-suffering and of tender mercy, a faithful God who will not keep His anger for ever."

III.

"Now, therefore, hearken, O Israel. I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them: for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.

"For what nation is there so great who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon Him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?

"Only take heed unto thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life; but teach them thy sons and thy sons' sons.

"Take heed unto yourselves then, lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God; lest, after ye shall have remained long in the land, and shall corrupt yourselves with the likeness of anything, and shall do evil in the sight of the Lord your God, to provoke

Him to anger; I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed.

"And the Lord shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the Lord shall lead you. And there ye shall serve gods the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.

"But, if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find Him, if thou seek Him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

"When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto His voice—for the Lord thy God is a merciful God—He will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which He sware unto them.

"For ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and ask from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it?

"Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live? Or hath God assayed to go and take Him a nation from the midst of another nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eye?

"Unto thee it was showed that thou mightest know that the Lord He is God, there is none else beside Him. Out of heaven He made thee to hear His voice, that He might instruct thee: and upon the earth He showed thee His great fire; and thou heardest His words out of the fire.

"And because he loved thy fathers, therefore He chose their seed after them, and brought thee out in His sight with His mighty power out of Egypt; to drive out nations from before thee, greater and mightier than thou art, to bring thee in, to give thee their land for an inheritance, as it is this day.

"Know, therefore, this day, and consider it in thine heart that the Lord He is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else.

"Thou shalt keep, therefore, His statutes, and His commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, for ever."

"Remember, therefore, the covenant which the Lord made with thee in Horeb, and the law and the statutes He gave thee there when thy fathers came unto me trembling, and said, If we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, we shall die. Go thou, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say: and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee, and we will hear it and do it.

IV.

"And the Lord heard the voice of their words, when they spake unto me; and the Lord said unto

me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said all that they have spoken. Oh that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear Me, and keep My commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!

"But they soon turned aside from following after Him, and murmured against Him, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat here in the wilderness? There is nothing but this manna before our eyes. And the Lord heard their murmurings, He gave them their hearts' desire, but sent leanness withal into their soul; and while the flesh was yet in their teeth He sent fire from heaven and consumed them. Because their heart was not whole with Him, but they were a disobedient and rebellious people, that dissembled with Him. They thought scorn of this good land which ye see with your eyes, and believed not His word, but, in their hearts, returned to Egypt; therefore did the Lord say they should die in the wilderness, and not see the land, flowing with milk and honey, which they had despised, but that their children should go over and possess it; as ye are about to do this day."

V.

"Hear, then, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love Him with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest

up; thou shalt bind them as a sign upon thine hand, and thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

"And when the Lord thy God have brought thee into that good land, to give thee great and goodly cities which thou buildedst not, and houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged which thou diggedst not, and vineyards and olive-trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full,—then beware lest thou forget the Lord, Which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; but thou shalt fear the Lord thy God and serve Him;—ye shall not go after other gods, neither shall ye tempt Him as ye did in Massah and in Meribah; but ye shall diligently keep His commandments and His testimonies; and ye shall do that which is right and good in the sight of the Lord: that it may be well with you, and that ye may go in and possess the good land which the Lord sware unto your fathers, to cast out all your enemies from before you, as the Lord hath spoken.

"Fear the Lord, then, for your good always, that He may preserve you alive as it is at this day. And it shall be your righteousness, if ye observe to do all the commandments of the Lord your God, which He commanded you.

"And when the Lord thy God shall bring thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, the Amorites, and other nations greater and mightier than thou, thou shalt smite them and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy to them.

"For the land is defiled, therefore doth the Lord visit the iniquity thereof upon it; and the land vomiteth out her inhabitants. Thou shalt, therefore, make no marriages with them, for they will turn thee away from following the Lord, to serve other gods, and the anger of the Lord shall be kindled against thee to destroy thee suddenly. But ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire.

"For thou art an holy people unto the Lord Thy God; the Lord hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people, for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you, and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you with a mighty hand and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt."

VI.

"Know, therefore, that the Lord thy God He is God, the Faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations; and repayeth them that hate Him to their face, to destroy them.

"But if thou shalt hearken to these judgments and keep and do them, the Lord thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which He sware unto thy fathers: and He will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee: He will bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy

wine, and thine oil, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep, in the land which He sware unto thy fathers to give thee. Thou shalt be blessed above all people; there shall not be a male or female barren among you, or among your cattle. And the Lord will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee, but will lay them upon all them that hate thee.

"And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments, or no. When he humbled thee and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord, doth man live. Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years.

"Thou shalt also consider in thine heart that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee. Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, to walk in His ways, and to fear Him. For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills, a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey, a land in which thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, and not lack anything in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass."

VII.

"Beware, then, lest when thou hast eaten and art full thou forget the Lord thy God in not keeping His commandments and His judgments, and His statutes, which I commanded thee this day; but thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which He hath given thee; and thou shalt not say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.

"Understand, therefore, that the Lord thy God is He which goeth over before thee. Speak not then, therefore, in thine heart, after that the Lord hath cast out those nations from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land: but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord dost drive them out from before thee. Not for thy righteousness, nor for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land, but for their wickedness doth He drive them out, and that He may perform the word which He sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

"Understand, therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiff-necked people. Remember, and forget not, how thou provokedst the Lord thy God to wrath in the wilderness: from the day that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the Lord.

"Therefore, when thou hast eaten and art full, and

hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein, and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied, beware lest thy heart be lifted up and thou forget the Lord thy God, Who brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were many fiery serpents, and scorpions, and dróught, where there was no water; Who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint; Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that He might humble thee, and that He might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end."

VIII.

"For, if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish. As the nations which the Lord destroyed before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the Lord your God.

"But when thou comest into that land, there shall be a place which the Lord your God shall choose to cause His name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all your offerings and sacrifices, and the choice vows which ye vow unto the Lord.

"Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt offerings in every place that thou seest. But in the place that the Lord shall choose in one of thy tribes, there shalt thou offer thy burnt offerings, and there shalt thou do as I command thee.

"Thou mayest not eat within thy gates the tithe of

thy corn, or of thy wine, or of thy oil, or the firstlings of thy flock,—but thou must eat them before the Lord thy God in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose, thou, thine, and the Levite that is within thy gates.

"Take heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite as long as thou livest upon the earth."

"If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, or if thy brother, thy son, or thy daughter, or even the wife of thy bosom, entice thee, secretly saying, Let us go and serve other gods—the gods of the people that are round about you,—thou shalt stone him with stones that he die, because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. Ye are the children of the Lord your God, an holy people unto Him, which He hath chosen to be a peculiar people unto Himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth. There shall naught of the cursed thing cleave to thine hand.

"At the end of every seven years, thou shalt make a release. Every creditor that lendeth aught to his neighbour shall release it; he shall not exact it of his neighbour, or of his brother; because it is called the Lord's release.

"And if there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren, within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother. But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth: for the poor shall never cease out of the land; therefore, I command thee,

saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to the needy in thy land. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee; therefore, I command thee this thing this day."

IX.

"Observe the first month, the month of the green ear, to keep the Passover unto the Lord thy God. Thou mayest not sacrifice it within any of thy gates; but at the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place His name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the Passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt."

"Thou shalt also keep the feast of weeks unto the Lord thy God, with a tribute of a freewill offering in thine hand, which thou shalt give according as the Lord thy God hath blessed thee."

"Thou shalt also observe the feast of tabernacles, seven days after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine."

"Three times a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which the Lord shall choose, in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the Lord empty. Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which He hath given thee."

"The priests, the Levites, and all the tribe of Levi, shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel; they shall eat the offerings of the Lord made by fire, and His inheritance. The first fruits of thine in-

crease, and a share in thy sacrifice shalt thou give them. For the Lord thy God hath chosen the Levite out of all thy tribes to stand to minister in the name of the Lord, him and his sons for ever.

"And if a Levite come from any of thy gates out of all Israel where he sojourned, and come with all the desire of his mind, unto the place which the Lord shall choose: then shall he minister in the name of the Lord his God, as all his brethren the Levites do, which stand there before the Lord. They shall have like portions to eat, besides that which cometh of the sale of his patrimony."

"The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken. According to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb, in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put My words in his mouth"—"whatsoever I speak, said THE WORD, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak"—"and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him; and it shall come to pass that whosoever will not hearken unto My words which he shall speak in My name I will require it of him."

Therefore did there appear afterwards "on the holy mountain, Moses and Elias talking with HIM;—and a voice was heard out of the cloud which said, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him."[1]

[1] S. Matt. xvii. 5.

"For he that believeth not God, hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son."[1]

X.

"O Israel, thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in His ways, and to keep His statutes, and His commandments, and His judgments, and to hearken unto His voice. And the Lord hath avouched thee to be His peculiar people, as He hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all His commandments, and to make thee high above all nations which He hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour; and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the Lord thy God, as He hath spoken."

"And Moses and the priests, the Levites, spake unto all Israel, saying, Take heed and hearken, O Israel; this day thou art become the people of the Lord thy God." Thou shalt therefore obey the voice of the Lord thy God, and keep His commandments. When thou art gone over Jordan thou shalt put the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal; Levites shall stand on either mountain to proclaim aloud before all the people the sins and wickedness on which the Lord's curse shall fall; and shall utter the fearful judgments that shall come upon thee, O Israel, "if thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD."

"But they shall also tell thee the blessings from heaven above and from the earth beneath, with which

[1] 1 John v. 10–12.

the Lord thy God shall bless thee abundantly, if thou wilt hearken unto His voice, and keep His commandments to do them." "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law."

"For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us that we may hear it and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us that we may hear it and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.

"See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil.

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: that thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey His voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto Him: for He is thy life, and the length of thy days; that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob to give them."

XI.

Thus spake Moses to the people assembled around him, sad, solemn, and sorrowful at the thought that they should soon no longer hear that voice addressing them in strains that had, many a time, touched their heart as they touch ours also.

"What doth the Lord thy God require of thee," said he to Israel, "but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul?"

What, indeed? This is the first and great commandment both for Israel and for ourselves; this was the spirit of all that which, without it, was a mere shadow; this, too, is the spirit, the life of our faith in God,—to love Him as our tender, loving Father, reconciled to us through the Son of His love; through Him "in Whom neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but faith that worketh by love."[1]

The Israelite was told to love Him, as the merciful, faithful Lord God, Who had saved him, fed, led, chastened, and protected him; Who had borne his murmurings in the wilderness, and in spite of them had at last brought him to the gates of Canaan, which He was about to break open by miracle in order to let him go in.

And we?—every one of us who, while his conscience smites him for having often murmured against God in his journey through the wilderness of life, says to himself as did the prodigal son, "Yet is He my Father; I have sinned against heaven and before Him, and am no more worthy to be called His son; but He loves me still, I am sure. I will arise at once and go to Him, and say, Father, I have sinned, but forgive me for the sake of Him Who died to reconcile me to Thee," saying, "He is not ashamed to call Himself my Brother."

Every one of us, in whom the spirit of adoption

[1] Gal. v. 6.

thus enables him to cry Abba, Father, loves God with a far more earnest and more genuine love than did a child of Israel. He loves Him with the certainty that the love wherewith God loved him, is an everlasting love, and that it rests on a covenant well ordered in all things and sure, that shall outlive the destruction of heaven and earth, and shall abide for ever in heaven.

Let us, then, take comfort from the words of Moses to Israel. We, too, may trace our journeyings through the wilderness; we may remember the heat of day when our toil seemed almost too much for us, and He refreshed us with water of life from Himself, the Rock of Israel, the Rock on which His Church is built, and Whose work is perfect. We, too, may remember more than one instance when we murmured against Him, and craved what His wisdom thought best to deny us, until at last He gave us our heart's desire, but sent with it, also, leanness into our soul; and we felt ashamed of having doubted His wisdom and His mercy, and of having murmured by desiring aught but what He saw fit to grant us.

And when our spirit was in heaviness, when our thoughts within us were perplexed and sorrowful, did we not at last fall back in faith, in trust, and in hope on these words, "He knoweth thy walkings through this great wilderness"? "True," says the Christian, "these many years has the Lord my God been with me, and I have lacked nothing. He led me by a way I knew not, and it is well I did not, that I might trust and obey Him; for He knew my path, and surely that is enough. He proved me, He tried me, He humbled me also, to see what was in mine heart,

whether I would serve Him or no; but I thank Him for having thus dealt with me, without yielding to my wayward will. He thus brought me closer to Him, He thus taught me that His presence alone, if it go with me, can give me rest—rest from sin, from trouble, from sorrow even here on earth, until I behold His presence in righteousness; and when I awake up after His likeness, I be satisfied with it.

"Standing as I now am on this side Jordan, on the threshold of the land He promised to give me, and whither JESUS shall bring me safe, I count as nothing the toil and roughness of the way I have come. Not only did His comforts refresh my soul when I little deserved even the smile of His countenance, much less tokens of His love, but even when the burden weighed heavy, and when the path trod rugged, it made me long to see these hills, these everlasting hills of the good land of heaven, my Father's Home, beyond which I now see the dawn of an eternal day. I have found Him faithful, long-suffering, pitiful, and gracious, unworthy though I be of His love; what else, then, can He require of me but to walk in all His ways, that are ways of peace, and to love and serve Him with all my heart and with all my soul, as I hope to do with His saints in heaven for evermore?"

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE DEATH OF MOSES.

I.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Behold, thy days approach that thou must die: call Joshua and present yourselves in the Tabernacle of the congregation that I may give Him a charge. And Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves in the Tabernacle of the congregation. And the Lord appeared in the Tabernacle in a pillar of a cloud; and the pillar of the cloud stood over the door of the Tabernacle.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, and this people will go after the gods of the strangers of the land, whither they go to be among them, and will forsake Me and break My covenant which I have made with them."

"And I will surely hide my face in that day from all the evils which they shall have wrought, in that they are turned to other gods.

"Now, therefore, write ye this song for you, and

teach it the children of Israel; put it in their mouths that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel."

II.

Moses, therefore, wrote this song the same day—"the song of Moses, the man of God," sung in heaven together with "the song of the Lamb"[1]—and taught it the children of Israel, saying—

"Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.

"My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass; because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God.

"He is the Rock, His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He.

"They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of His children: they are a perverse and crooked generation.

"Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? is not He thy Father that hath bought thee? hath He not made thee, and established thee?

"Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.

"When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.

[1] Rev. xv. 3.

"For the Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance.

"He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; He led him about, he instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye.

"As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings, so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.

"He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields; and He made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock; butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat; and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape.

"But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked; thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.

"They provoked Him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they Him to anger.

"They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.

"Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee.

"And when the Lord saw it, He abhorred them, because of the provoking of His sons and of His daughters.

"And He said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be; for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith.

" They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

" For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains.

" I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them.

" They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust.

" The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also with the man of grey hairs.

" I said, I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men: Were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely, and lest they should say, Our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this.

" For they are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding in them.

" Oh that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end! How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up? For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.

" For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of

the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter: their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps.

"Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures? To me belongeth vengeance and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.

"For the Lord shall judge His people, and repent Himself for His servants, when He seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, or left.

"And He shall say, Where are their gods, their rock in whom they trusted, which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, and drank the wine of their drink offerings? let them rise up and help you, and be your protection.

"See now that I, even I, am He, and there is no god with me: I kill and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of My hand.

"For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever.

"If I whet My glittering sword, and Mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to Mine enemies, and will reward them that hate Me.

"I will make Mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy.

"Rejoice, O ye nations, with His people: for He will avenge the blood of His servants, and will render vengeance to His adversaries, and will be merciful unto His land, and to His people.

"And Moses came and spake all the words of this song in the ears of the people, he, and Hoshea the son of Nun.

"And Moses made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel: and he said unto them, Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law.

"For it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life: and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land, whither ye go over Jordan to possess it."

III.

"And it came to pass when Moses had made an end of writing the words of the law in a book until they were finished, that he commanded the Levites which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for witness against thee. For I know thy rebellion and thy stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day ye have been rebellious against the Lord; and how much more after my death!"[1]

"Then Moses called unto Joshua, and said unto him in the sight of Israel, Be strong and of good courage: for thou must go with this people unto the land which the Lord hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt cause them to inherit it. And the Lord, He it is that doth go before thee; He will be with thee; He will not fail thee, neither forsake thee; fear not, neither be dismayed."

A solemn, touching sight, to behold the Law that

[1] Deut. xxxi. 24.

could not bring God's people into heaven, give him in charge to JESUS, who, like Joshua, had the Spirit of God, but, unlike him, "not by measure;" Who led the van as Captain of the Lord's hosts; who clave asunder the grave and walked through it as on dry ground to conquer for His Church the kingdom of heaven. A shadow; but what light!

IV.

After this Moses blessed the tribes of Israel, and said to the people,

"There is none like the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in His excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and Who is the sword of thy excellency! thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places."

Words true to the uttermost for every child of God during his earthly pilgrimage; for what would come of him, if his Father, "the eternal God were not his refuge," and if he did not find in his day of trial and in the hour of his adversity, that "underneath are the everlasting arms,"—arms that have borne him as on eagles' wings over the rough places of the earth?

True. Every one who "walketh humbly with his God," in covenant with Him through the adoption wrought for him by Christ, and who, in that Spirit, says to Him, Abba, Father, must, on the eve of his entering the Good Land, say, Many a time was I, like

Israel in the wilderness, "discouraged because of the way," but He bare me up, He made my way plain and brought me safe hither. Never should I have reached Home, the mansions in My Father's House, which JESUS went to prepare for His people, had it not been for God's "everlasting arms;" for the strength, the power, the love that never fail, for the wisdom that never errs, for the patience and long-suffering that never flag, and for the faithfulness that endures for evermore. Never.

Yea, had it not been for His justice that chastened, for His will that ordered, and for His Providence that guided me, may God's child say, never, never should I have come through "this great and terrible wilderness" unto the borders of the Promised Land.

But "He is faithful that promised." He sent His Angel, the Angel of His presence, to be with me by the way; even when I sinned against Him and He hid His face from me for a time; but in mercy did He once more show Himself, and bring me back from my waywardness. I acknowledge my transgressions, and mourn over my sins; I smite upon my breast and say, God be merciful unto me a sinner, even here, in sight of the lea of Jordan;—but I also confess to His praise, that "His promises in Christ are yea, and in Him, Amen," unto the glory of Him "Who keepeth His covenant for evermore"—not for my goodness, nor yet for my righteousness; no, indeed! but for His everlasting love, "which He commendeth towards me in that while I was yet a sinner, Christ died for me."[1] He is faithful that promised. I have trusted Him, and I will yet trust Him unto the end.

[1] Rom. v. 8.

V.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses that self-same day, saying, Get thee up into this Mountain Abarim unto Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, over against Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: and die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people; as Aaron thy brother died in Mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people."[1]

"Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the Lord showed him all the land of Gilead unto Dan, and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea, and the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar.

"And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither."

VI.

"So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor; but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day."[2]

No; but he is in glory with God.

VII.

For it came to pass, in process of time, that the

[1] Deut. xxxii. 48. [2] Ch. xxxiv. 1–6.

Prophet of whom he spake, JESUS, took with Him His three Apostles, Peter, James, and John, "and went up into a mountain to pray." And as He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was altered, and His raiment was white and glistening.

"And, behold, there talked with Him two men, which were Moses and Elias: who appeared in glory, and spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem."[1]

How, then, was Moses raised from among the flags of the river to the exalted rank of greatest prophet and friend of God, and thence to glory?—Through much suffering.

What made him endure it?—Faith.

"By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents.

"By faith, also, when he was come of years, did he refuse to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had regard unto the recompense of the reward.

"By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured as seeing Him Who is invisible.

"Through faith he kept the Passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest He that destroyed the firstborn should touch them;" though he, with all the saints of old, "having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise" on earth:

[1] S. Luke ix. 28.

"God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."[1]

So, then, for us also is there no other way to that same glory than "faith working by love." Every other track of man's device is treacherous and false; it only misleads, and comes short of the glory of God.

[1] Heb. xi. 23-40.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE ENTRANCE OF ISRAEL INTO THE PROMISED LAND.

I.

Moses was dead, and the children of Israel wept thirty days for him in the plains of Moab.[1]

And when the days of weeping and of mourning for him were ended, the Lord spake unto Joshua, the son of Nun,—"who was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands upon him,"[2]—saying, "Moses, My servant, is dead; now, therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them—as I was with Moses, so will I be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses, My servant, commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest."

"This Book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and

[1] Deut. xxxiv. 8. [2] Josh. i.

night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. Have I not commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

The charge was given, the help was promised, and faithful Joshua obeyed. He commanded the officers of the people to pass through the host and to tell the people to prepare themselves victuals, for that within three days they should pass over Jordan, to go in and possess the land which the Lord God gave them to inherit; he also summoned the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, to hold themselves ready to go over with their brethren and help them to conquer the land. And with one voice and one heart they answered him, saying, "All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go. According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto Thee: only the Lord thy God be with thee as He was with Moses. Whosoever he be that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death: only be strong and of good courage."

Then Joshua sent from Shittim two men to spy the land secretly. They came to Jericho, and there lodged in the house of a woman named Rahab, whose house was on the city wall, and who hid them from the men sent by the king of Jericho to take them; telling them at the same time that the heart of

the people of the land did melt at the news of all that the Lord had done for His people and of all they had done to Sihon, king of the Amorites, and to Og, king of Bashan. And as she let them down the window of her house, she entreated them to spare her and her family when they came in to storm the city. They promised it, and after having hidden themselves among the hills that rise above Jericho, until those who pursued them to the fords of Jordan had returned to the city, they passed over and came to Joshua, and told him all that had befallen them, adding, "Truly the Lord hath delivered into our hands all the land: for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us."[1]

Good news for the host of Israel; yet no better than they could expect if they believed the word of the Lord, that He would go before them and put the dread of them in the hearts of the inhabitants of the land. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Whether against the fenced cities of Canaan, or against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places, or yet against our own spiritual enemies, sin, the world, and the devil,—our weapons, if they be the same as those of the holy Apostle, "are not carnal, but mighty to the pulling down of strongholds;" giving us victory over our foes.

In this case the Lord fought for Israel, and made a way for him, because Israel obeyed Him, and because He must keep the covenant made with the fathers, to whom He had promised the land of Canaan. The same holds good for us, too: if He be

[1] Josh. ii.

not on our side and for us, in our encounter with our spiritual enemies, whose fault is it? Not His, assuredly; but our own.

So when Joshua heard the report of the spies, he rose early in the morning, and he and the people removed from Shittim and came to Jordan and lodged there before they passed over.

And the officers told the people, "When ye see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the priests and the Levites bearing it, then shall ye remove from your place, and go after it. Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure; come not near unto it that ye may know the way ye must go; for ye have not passed this way heretofore."

"And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves: for to-morrow the Lord will do wonders among you."

"And on the morrow he said unto them, Come hither, and hear the words of the Lord your God. Hereby shall ye know that the living God is among you, and that He will without fail drive out from before you the inhabitants of Canaan. Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan.

"And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people; and as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water (for the Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest)—that is from early in April to the first of May—that the waters which

came down from above, stood and rose up upon an heap, very far from the city Adam that is beside Zaretan, and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the Salt Sea, failed and were cut off; and the people passed over right against Jericho. And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan."

"And when the people were clean passed over Jordan the Lord commanded Joshua to take twelve men, one out of every tribe, and to take every man a stone from the midst of Jordan, and to bring it upon his shoulder unto the lodging-place that night. And of these twelve stones Joshua built a monument, for the generations to come; a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever, of the waters of Jordan having been cut off before the ark of the covenant, and of the people having passed over dry-shod. Joshua also set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant, stood.

"For the priests which bare the ark, stood in the midst of Jordan until everything was finished that the Lord commanded Joshua to speak to the people; and when the people were clean passed over, the ark of the Lord passed over, and the priests, in the presence of the people.

"And the children of Reuben, of Gad, and of half the tribe of Manasseh, passed over armed, before the children of Israel as Moses spake unto them; about forty thousand, prepared for war, passed over before the Lord unto battle, to the plains of Jericho.

"And the Lord spake unto Joshua, who commanded the priests to come up out of Jordan.

"And it came to pass, when the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord were come up out of the midst of Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were lifted up unto the dry land, that the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and flowed over all his banks as they did before.

"The people then came up out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped in Gilgal, in the east border of Jericho;" just in time to keep the Passover. Not, as before, on the banks of the Nile; not like accursed slaves cast out with imprecations, and fleeing for their life from before their cruel oppressors; but as conquerors of Canaan did they now keep the Feast, in token of past deliverances, in gratitude for the gift of the Promised Land, and at rest from victories already won in the name of the Lord, as pledges of yet greater ones to be gained over enemies that were doomed to perish.

CHAPTER XX.

ISRAEL IN THE PROMISED LAND.

THUS ended the first great outline of God's Church, so distinctly drawn that he that runneth may see and read it. As the existence of a Church in the earth—that is, of an institution whereby fallen man should be reclaimed from his inevitable doom—is a natural and necessary consequence of the existence of God and of the fall of man, no man can deny the existence of a Church, but he who, whatever he may say or think, denies the existence of God as God is, loving and compassionate, but also just. And, unless he deny both God and Church, he cannot shut his eyes to the very remarkable outline of the Church the writings of Moses were intended to give us at the outset, in ensamples which, however disregarded by those who were actors in them, were plainly written for our "admonition unto whom the ends of the world are come."

Any man, not altogether bereft of thought and reflection, be his creed what it will, who reads the

account left us,—first of the call of Abraham, of the promises made him, and of the fulfilment of every one of them in time successively—then of his children going to Egypt, as foretold him; of their being afflicted there during the specified time and no longer, and then marvellously rescued from bondage, by a man set up under God for that purpose—led through the Red Sea, fed from heaven during forty years of the most eventful wanderings in a great and terrible wilderness, where they subsisted only by miracle, on their way to a land promised them as their inheritance, by Him Who constituted Himself their Lord, their God, and their Father, and made them His people; then of the laws, the priesthood, and the form of service, He gave and established—of the blessing and curse that rested either on the keeping or on the breaking of those statutes; of the remarkable examples that occurred of both one and the other in the manner in which those who despised the good land promised came short of it and never saw it, as a punishment for their murmurings, despite their privileges, and the bond of their covenant with God, which they had thus broken—and, at last, the entrance of the people into the Promised Land, through the waters of a river cleft asunder for them, at the command of their leader, who was not a Levite, but who was set up especially for the purpose of bringing in the people into their inheritance,—no man, it may be presumed, could read such an account, with no greater care or interest than he bestows on the wars of Thucydides, or on the stories of Herodotus, without admitting that there is in it more than mere coincidence, but that it shows both purpose and design, and—with

every allowance made for doubt, unbelief, or scepticism—that neither the purpose nor the design could have been of human forethought, but that both must have been formed and wrought out by the Divine Will.

So would reason any candid and honest man. The subject matter of the Pentateuch, therefore, and the broad outline of the facts told therein, would, of themselves alone, lead him to conclude that, as they could not be of human invention or design, neither could their description be human only; but that in the writing of them the same agent must have helped, who devised and arranged them. But alas! we daily have abundant proof, and often of the meanest and most pitiable kind, that, apart from all religious feeling, candour and honesty are qualities very rarely found among gainsayers of the truth. If they were both candid and honest, they would not oppose it.—But they have their reward.

If, then, the narrative of Israel's rescue from Egypt, of his wanderings in the wilderness, and of his entrance into Canaan, thus bears witness of its own truth to the mind which is neither blinded by ignorance nor soured by prejudice, it looks like a picture, to the eyes of the Christian, who therein sees a distinct shadow and a broad outline, both of the whole scope of God's Church as rescued, set apart, and severed from the world; as led militant and tried through the period of Time, during which, all her sons are to be gathered together, until she enter triumphant into heaven to rest there for ever,—and also of his own life and experience as a member of that Church, during his stay on earth, and until he cross the valley of the

shadow of death, under the leadership of Him Who overcame death for his sake, and Who made for him an entrance into His heavenly kingdom.

The Christian who believes the Bible—he is not one that does not—and who reads it to be taught thereby, and to study therein the ways of God with the Church He chose from everlasting, loves to see how from the very beginning, that Church has rested on the Rock, on the "RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH IS BY FAITH" IN CHRIST. For it was only faith in the promise of Him, and in the reconciliation to be wrought by His atoning sacrifice, that kept Adam from despair, and Eve's heart from breaking, when the cherub brandished his flaming sword in their faces, and bid them leave at once the garden of Eden. That same faith laid the lamb on Abel's altar; made Enoch walk with God; brought Abram out of Ur, and led him across deserts and through rivers, to the land promised to his children, where "he saw the Day of Christ and rejoiced," and where God made and renewed His covenant with him.

It was He, then, Christ, Who, being promised as Son of man and Son of God, appeared at Mamre, and gave shadows of Himself in Isaac and in Joseph; until the people of God being rescued from Egypt and baptized "His Church in the wilderness," He became, as it were, more manifest among them. Though not revealed to the world, He yet watched over her, and went with her in her infancy, gently leading her, first by shadows, and by the very law she could not fulfil, to look to Him, and to hope in His Salvation,—until at His bid, at the command of JESUS, the Son of God, Whom Jesus the son

of Nun foreshadowed, the waters of death retreated in a heap as far back as the city of Adam, of him Who had brought in sin and death—"for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive"—where they continued until the people had passed. And thus, too, will they abide until the redeemed of Christ shall have crossed the grave, that severs the wilderness of this world from their Home in heaven, and shall set foot in that Land of Promise where they are to reign with Him for ever.

There will they enter into fellowship with God, in Whom, with Whom, and for Whom they shall live throughout eternity. There manna shall cease, for their meat and drink will be, to do the will of their Father and to rejoice evermore in His love; there will they keep the new, the true Passover, as a memorial unto all eternity, of their having passed from death unto life, of their having been rescued, delivered, saved, and redeemed at the price of the precious blood of the Lamb without blemish and without spot, prepared for them even before the foundation of the world; there will they walk in white, in the spotless garments of His righteousness, and follow Him whithersoever He goeth; and there shall His redeemed people wear the crown of their royal priesthood, and on their harps tuned to the melodies of angels they will sing—

"Unto Him That loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

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Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 19 September, 2016